

THE COMPUTER INSECTIARY

A field guide to viruses, bugs, worms, Trojan horses, and other stuff that will eat your programs and rot your brain

By Roger Ebert and John Kratz

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Andrews and McMeel
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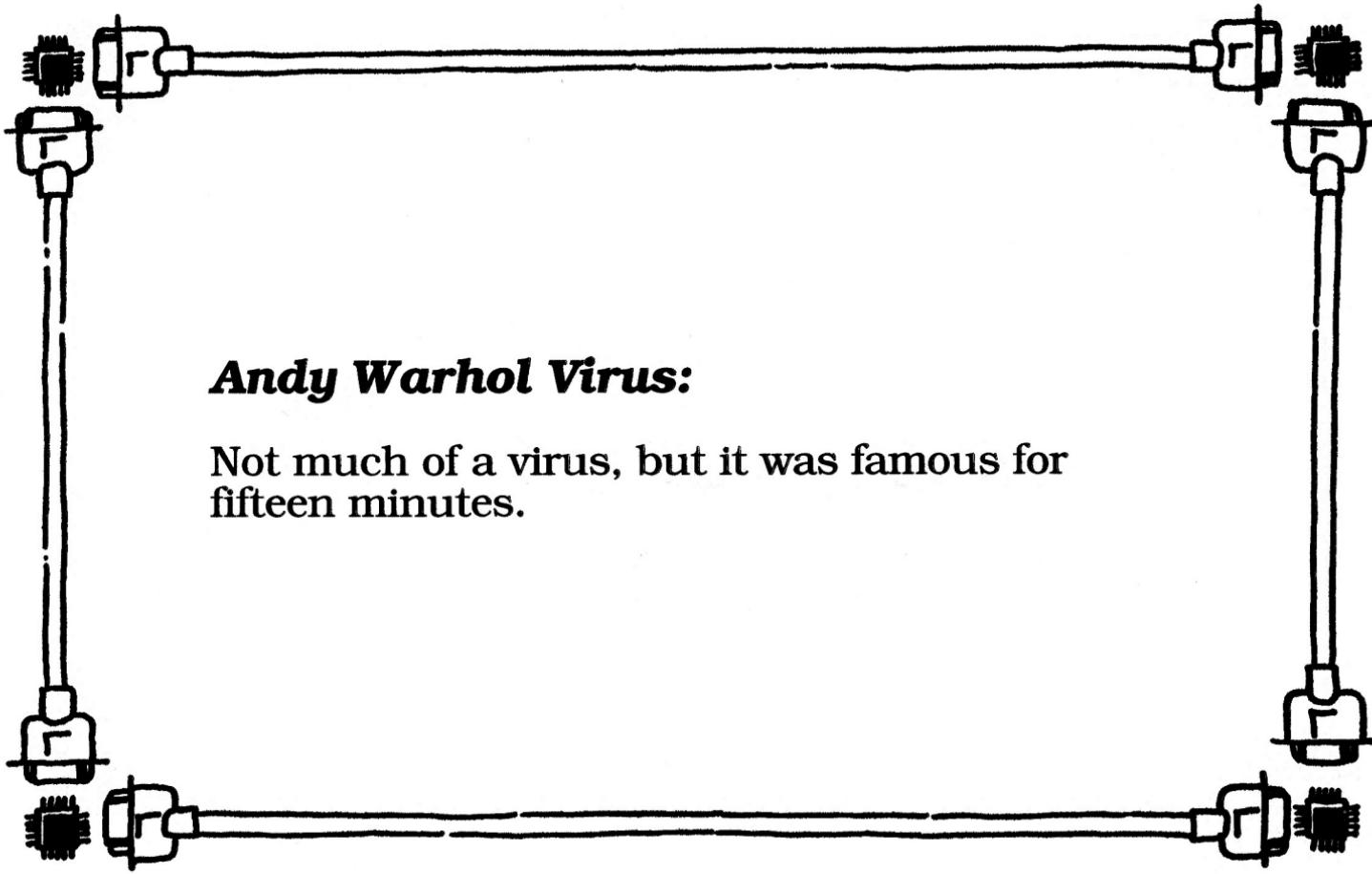
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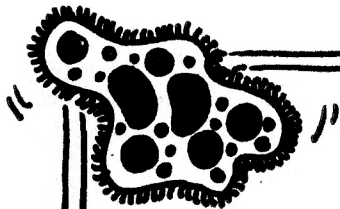
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Andy Warhol Virus:

Not much of a virus, but it was famous for fifteen minutes.

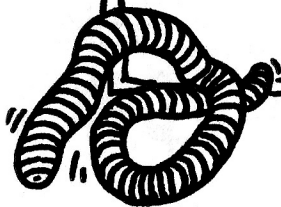


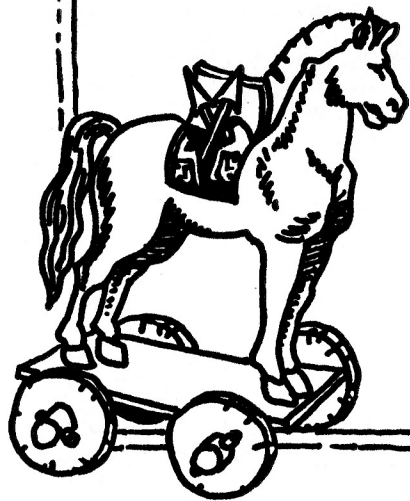
Apocalypse Now Virus:

Plays Wagner while it attacks.

Apple Newton Virus:

Memorizes your handwriting and sends obscene faxes to all your friends.



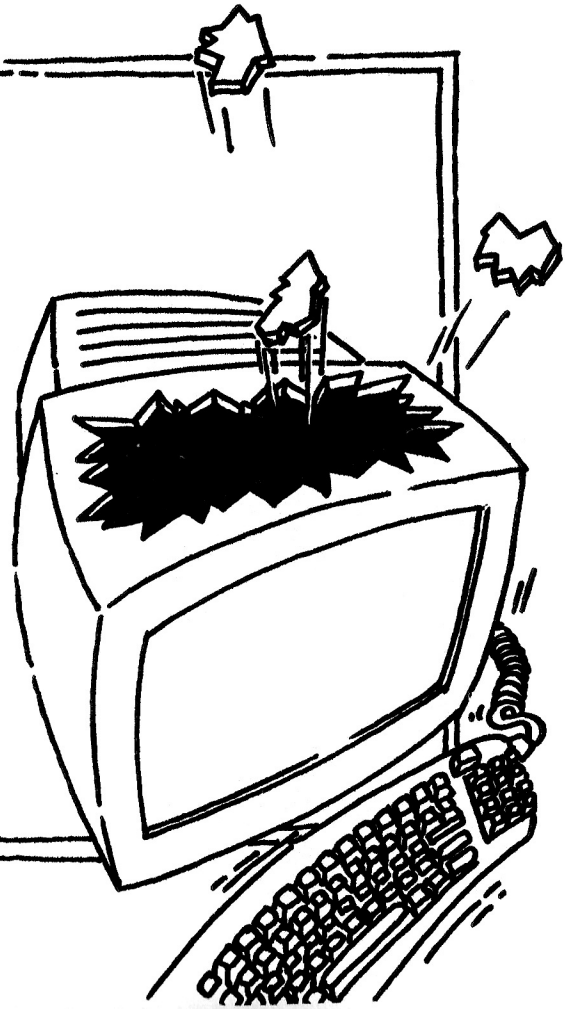


***Arnold Schwarzenegger
Virus, Strain 1:***

Bench presses your monitor five
hours a day.

Arnold Schwarzenegger Virus, Strain 2:

Affects users through subliminal message technology. Creates overwhelming urge to consume daily twenty-seven broiled chicken breasts, twenty-two oatmeal pancakes mixed with thirty-five egg whites, and fifteen servings steamed broccoli.





Automotive Electronic Fuel Injection Virus:

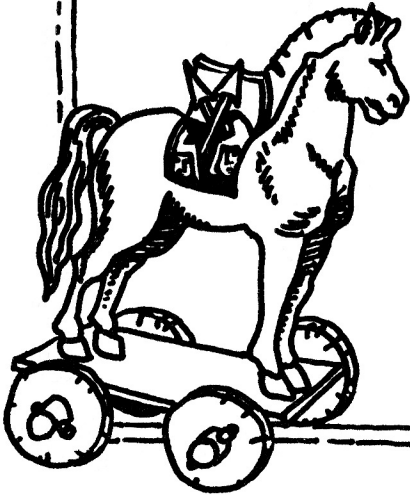
Causes engine failure in cars over five years old. Forces you to spend thousands of dollars on repairs which never fix the problem. In pre-computer days, such difficulties would have been addressed by a twenty-dollar carburetor tune-up kit.

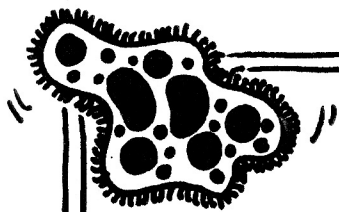
Beavis and Butt-head Virus:

Chooses program at random,
chants, "Huh, huh . . . this pro-
gram sucks! Huh, huh, huh."

Birthday Virus:

Every year on your birthday,
flashes your true age on the
screens of every computer on
the network.



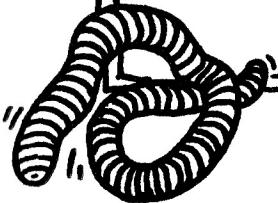


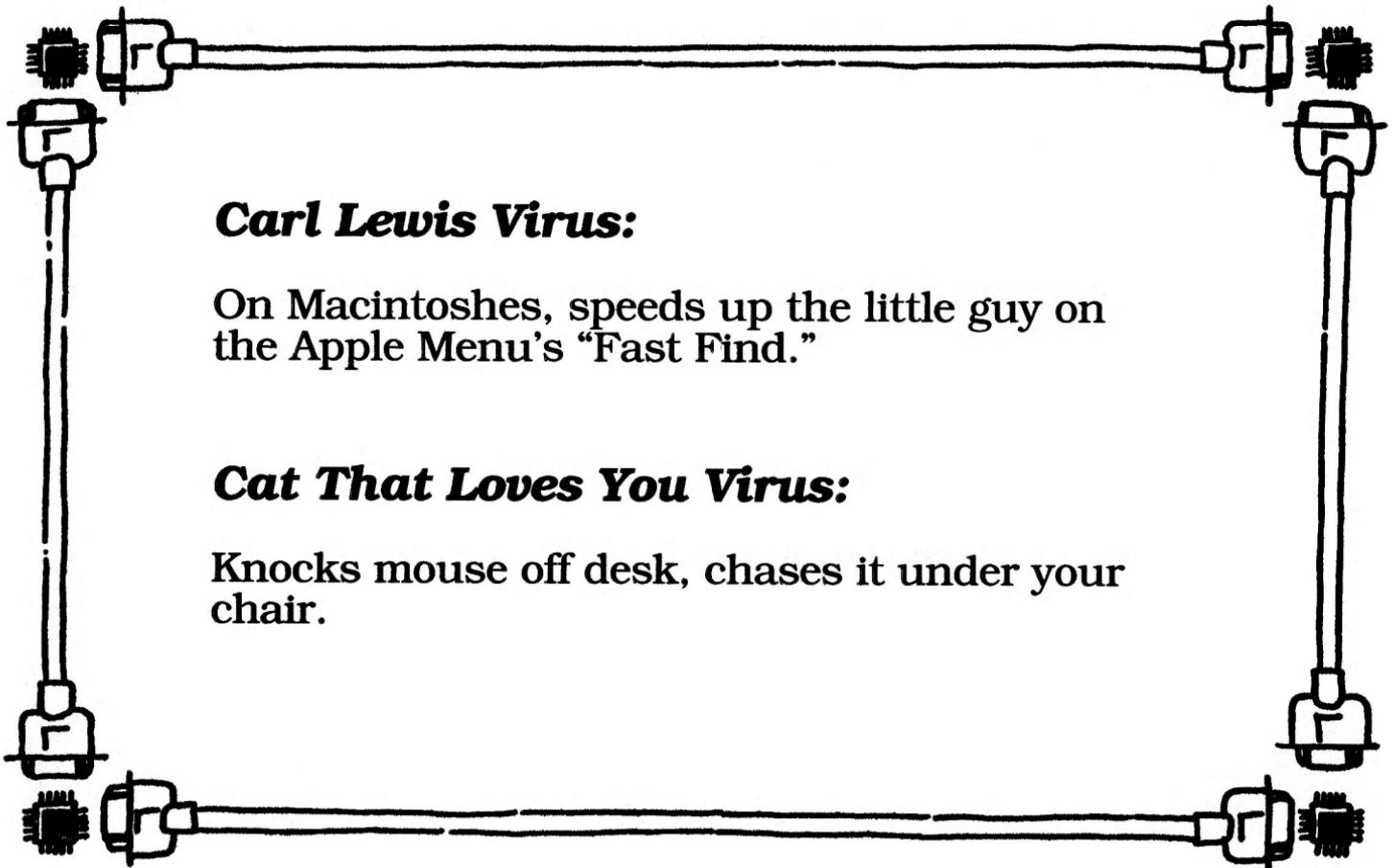
Canadian Virus:

Encloses all documents in the world's longest unprotected border.

Captain Ahab Virus:

Circles obsessively through RAM, looking for Moby Disk.





Carl Lewis Virus:

On Macintoshes, speeds up the little guy on the Apple Menu's "Fast Find."

Cat That Loves You Virus:

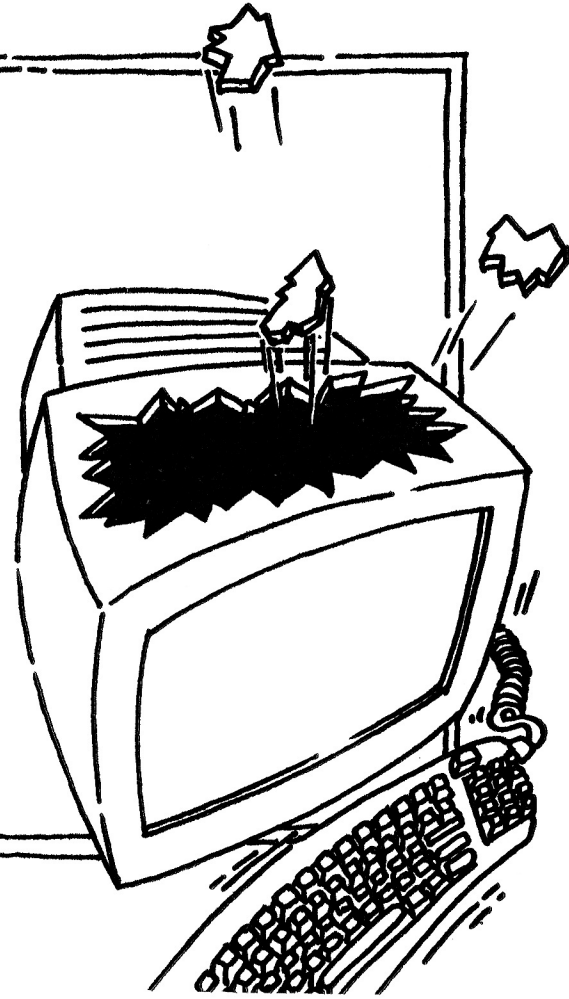
Knocks mouse off desk, chases it under your chair.

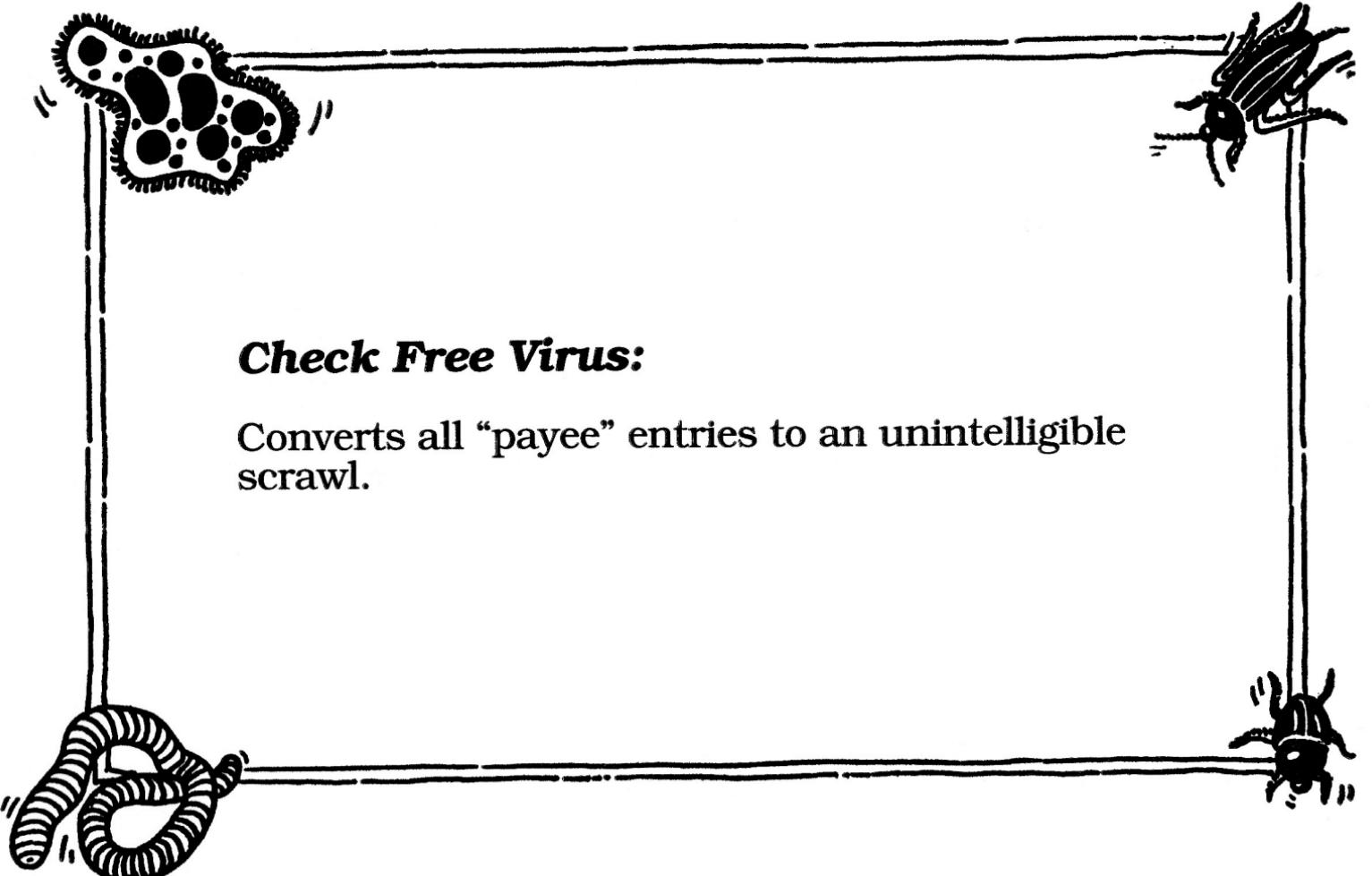
***Cat's-Eye View of the
Ultimate Purpose of
Life Virus:***

Blanks out the screen and purrs
while endlessly recycling memory.

Cat's-Eye View Virus:

System assumes you are similar
to it, only bigger and not so
intelligent.



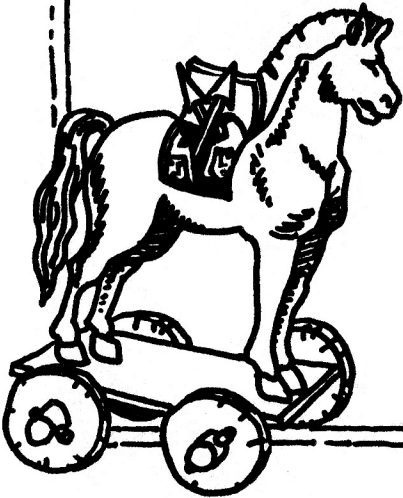


Check Free Virus:

Converts all “payee” entries to an unintelligible scrawl.

Chicago Cubs Virus:

Never lands in the top half of your memory.

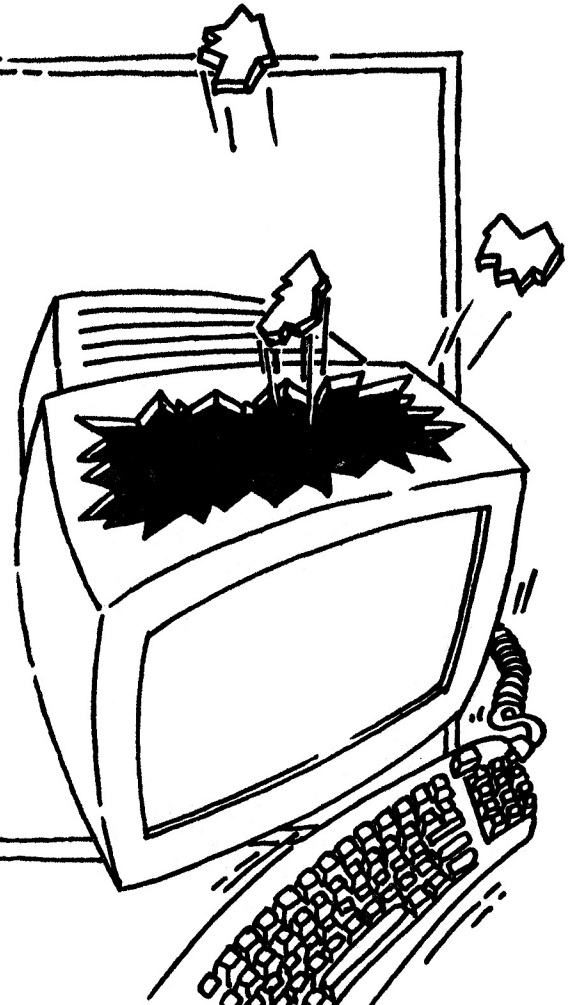


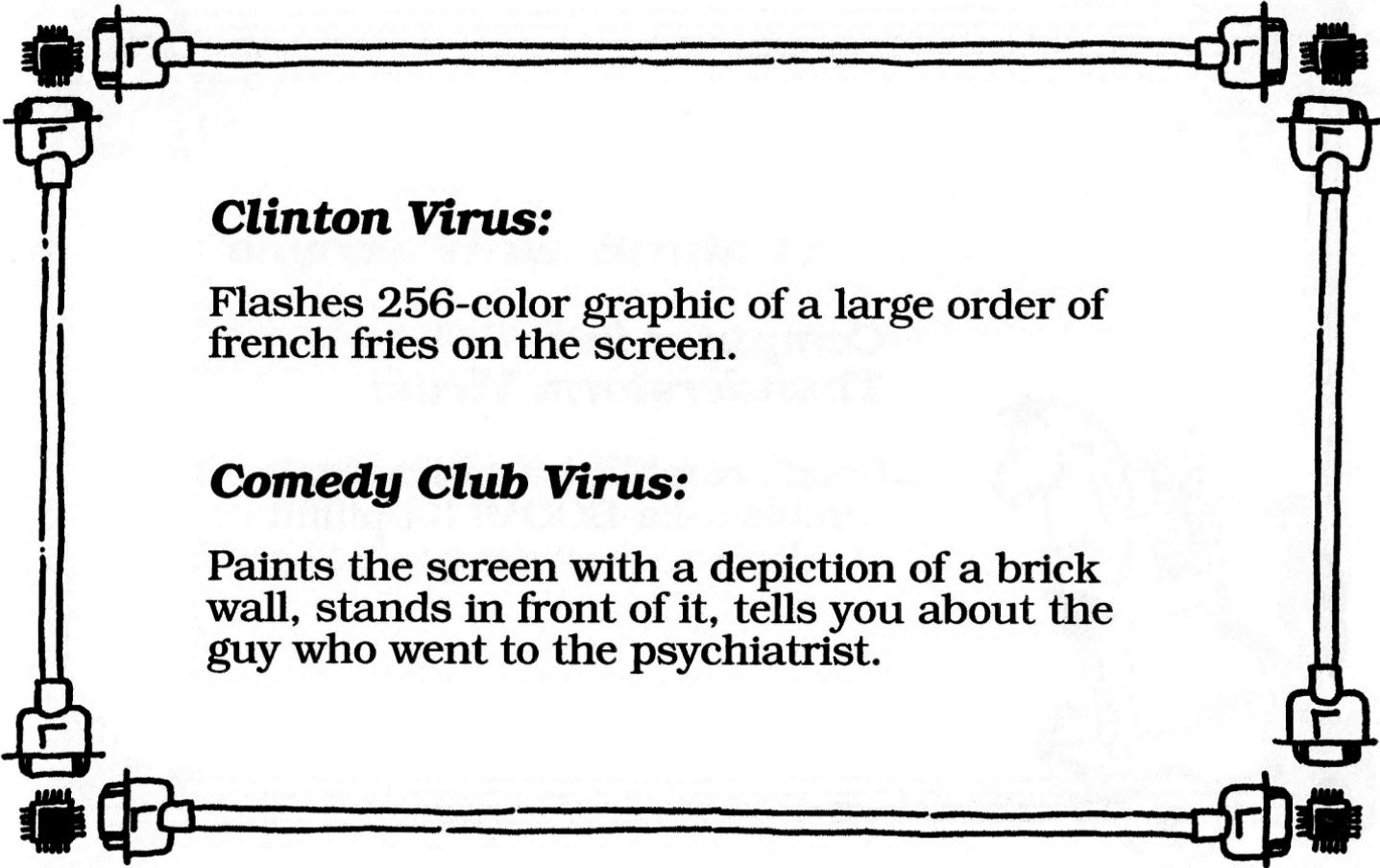
Chicago Virus:

You wanna get something fixed on the computer, it gives you the name of a guy you ought to go and see.

Citizen Kane Virus:

Puts sled in wrong folder at beginning of session, spends hours looking for it.





Clinton Virus:

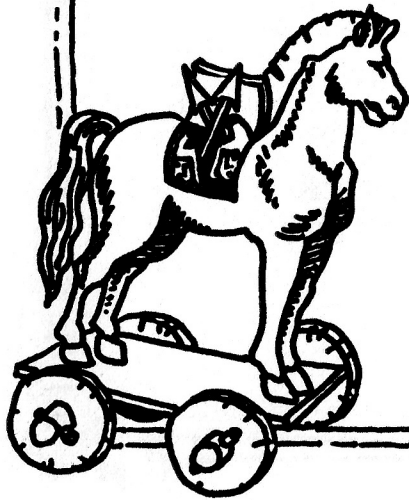
Flashes 256-color graphic of a large order of french fries on the screen.

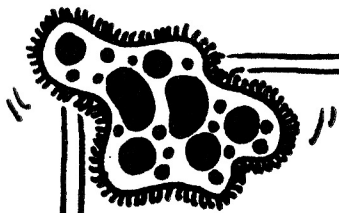
Comedy Club Virus:

Paints the screen with a depiction of a brick wall, stands in front of it, tells you about the guy who went to the psychiatrist.

***Computer in a
Thunderstorm Virus:***

Boom, rumble, ka-ru-ru-rumb-
rumble-a-ka-BOOM! Ka-pfffffft . . .



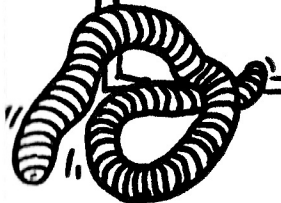


Congress Virus, Strain 1:

Overdraws your disk.

Congress Virus, Strain 2:

Doesn't pay postage on e-mail.





Crying Game *Virus*:

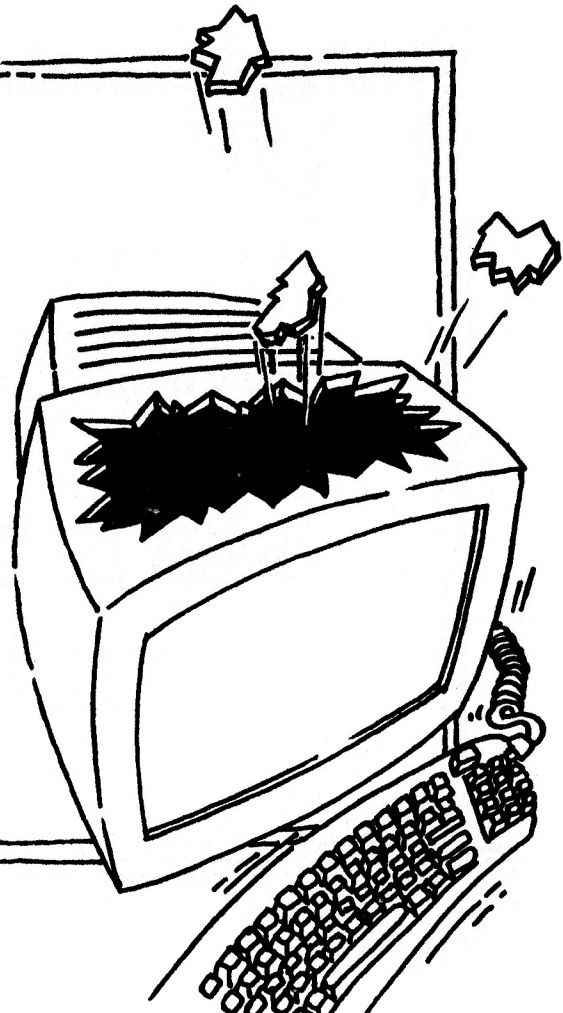
What a surprise! Your cute little word processor turns out to include a full-featured desktop publishing program.

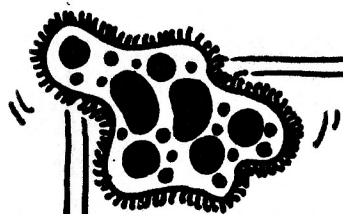
Dan Quayle Virus, Variant 1:

Youre systeme betrayes odde
spellinge behaviore.

Dan Quayle Virus, Variant 2:

Forces your computer to play "PGA
Tour" from ten A.M. to four P.M. six
days a week.



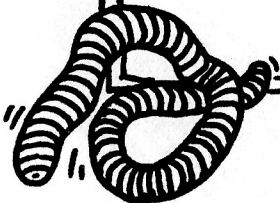


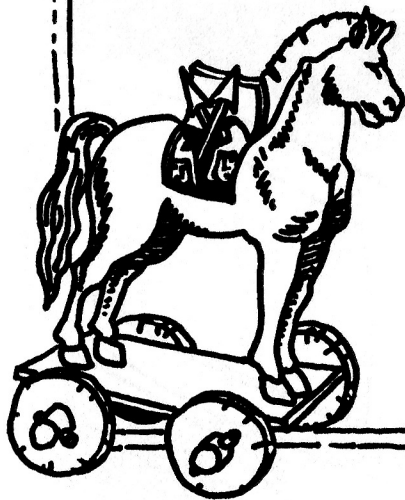
David Duke Virus:

Admits it used to be a virus, but claims it is now a mainstream program. If installed, paints the screen white.

David Letterman Virus, Variant 1:

Makes you stick to the keyboard as if your fingers were covered with Velcro.



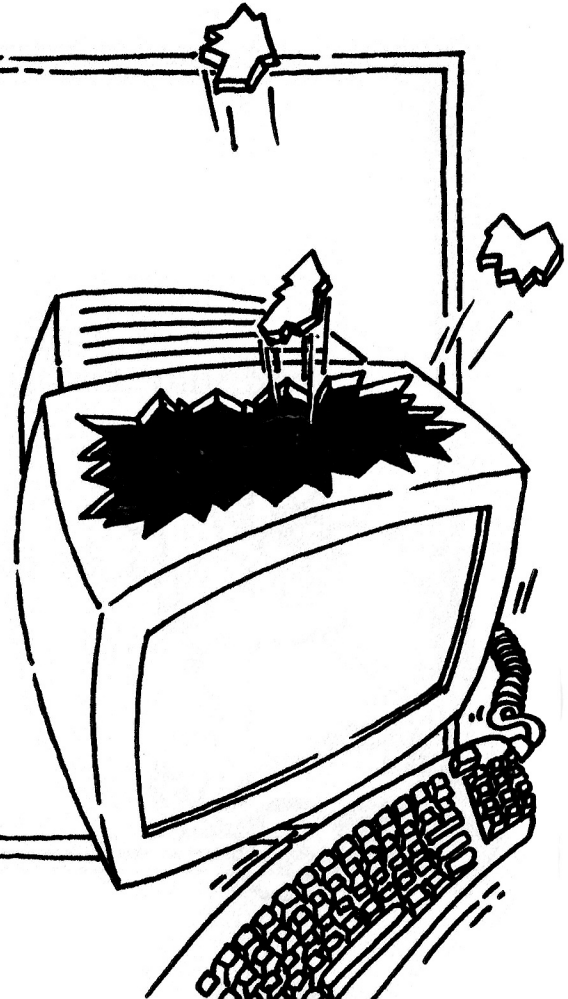


***David Letterman Virus,
Variant 2:***

Does ten stupid computer tricks.

***David Letterman Virus,
Variant 3:***

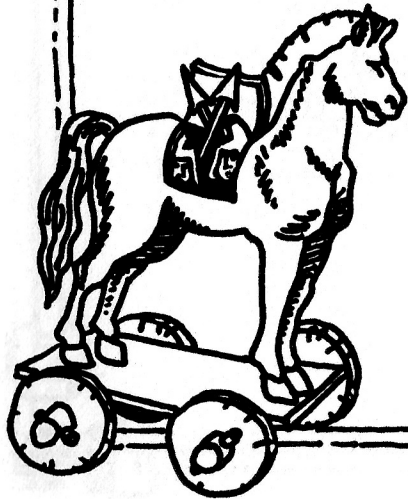
Ejects floppy disks over your
shoulder accompanied by the
sound of breaking glass.





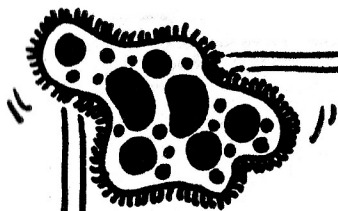
Daylight Saving Virus:

A minor nuisance from the first weekend in April to the last weekend in October, and then its effects disappear.



Detroit Virus:

Inhabits on-board computers in Japanese cars. Late at night, after owner is asleep, it starts the car and allows it to idle for an hour, lowering its gas mileage.

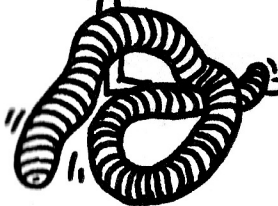


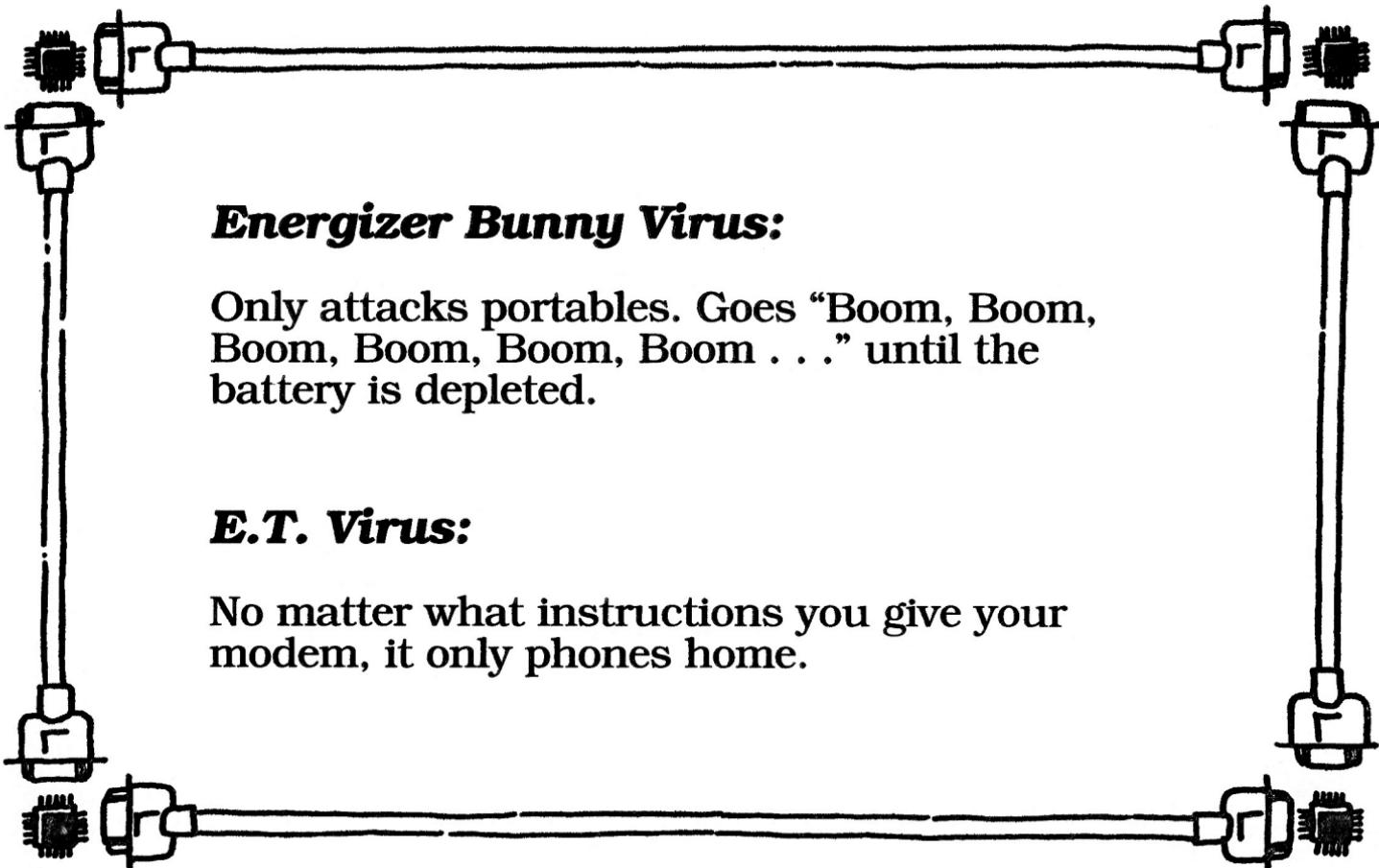
Disney Old-Time Animation Virus:

Every new item on your screen flows down from the top, following a fat paintbrush.

Elizabeth Taylor Virus:

Doesn't look a byte over 39K.





Energizer Bunny Virus:

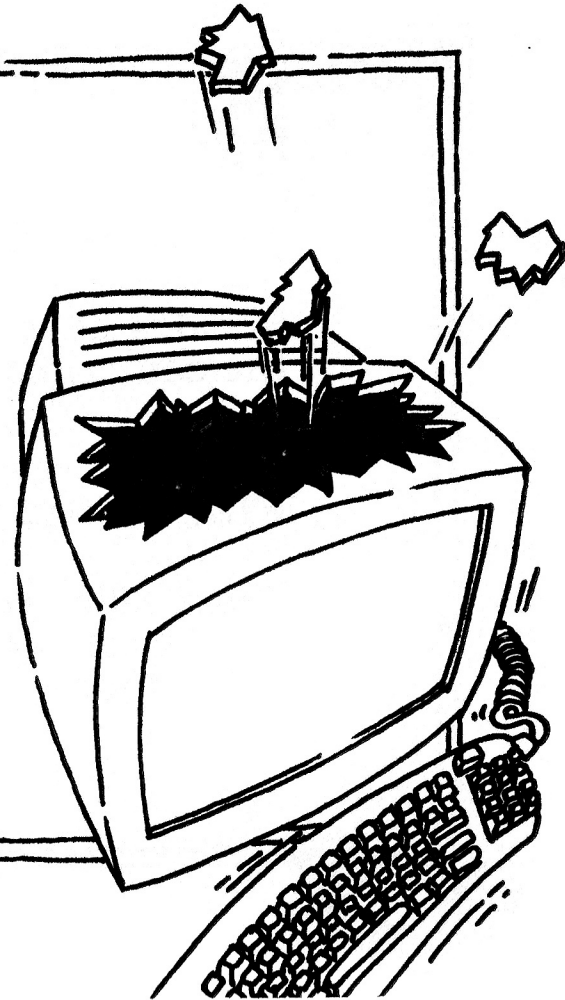
Only attacks portables. Goes “Boom, Boom, Boom, Boom, Boom, Boom . . .” until the battery is depleted.

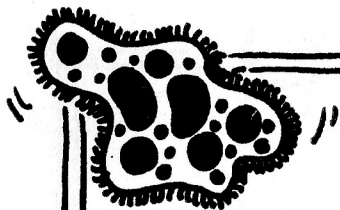
E.T. Virus:

No matter what instructions you give your modem, it only phones home.

Exercise at Fifty Virus:

Locks system into perpetual state
of warm-up.



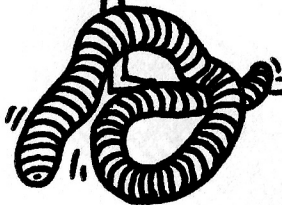


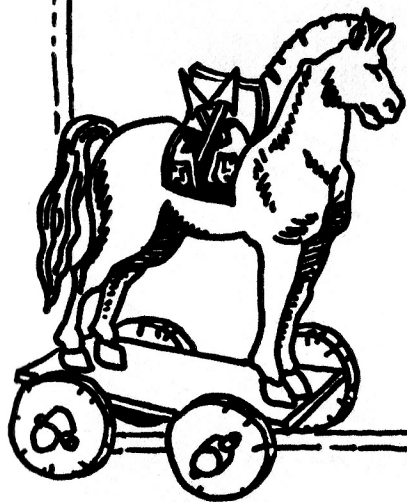
Far Side Virus:

Resides in your computer, does its damage in the computer on the next desk.

FDA Virus:

Won't allow you into the Holistic Health Forum on CompuServe without a doctor's prescription.



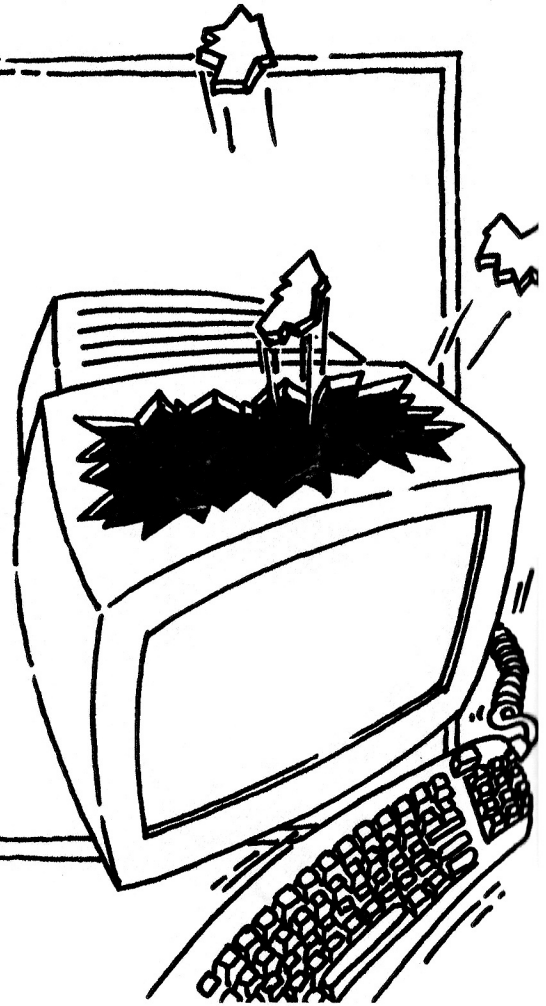


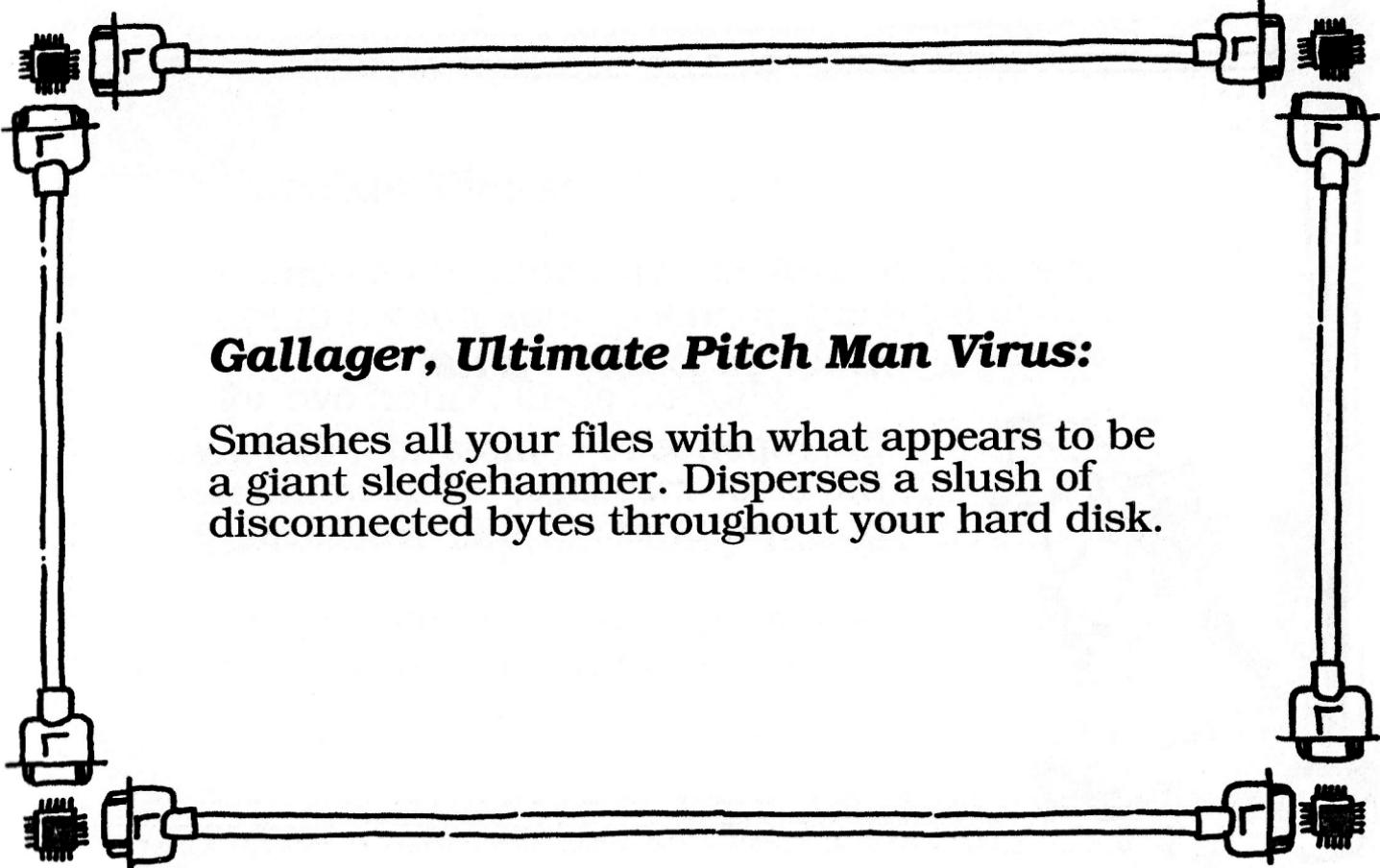
Frank Sinatra Virus:

Computer ignores your
instructions, plays "My Way."

French Virus:

Causes the computer to pretend it doesn't understand a single command you send to it, even though your accent is perfect.



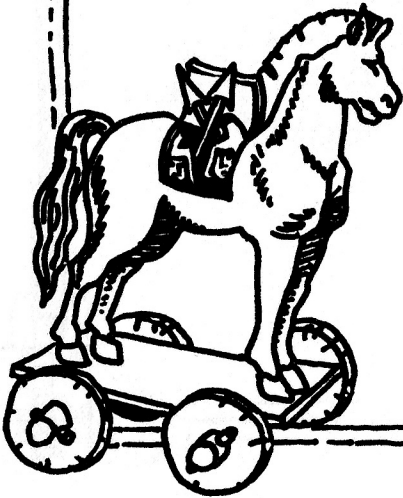


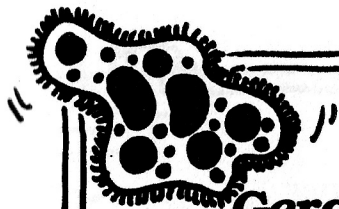
Gallager, Ultimate Pitch Man Virus:

Smashes all your files with what appears to be a giant sledgehammer. Disperses a slush of disconnected bytes throughout your hard disk.

George Bush Virus:

In response to commands, displays the error message, "That would not be appropriate at this juncture."



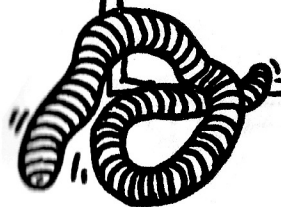


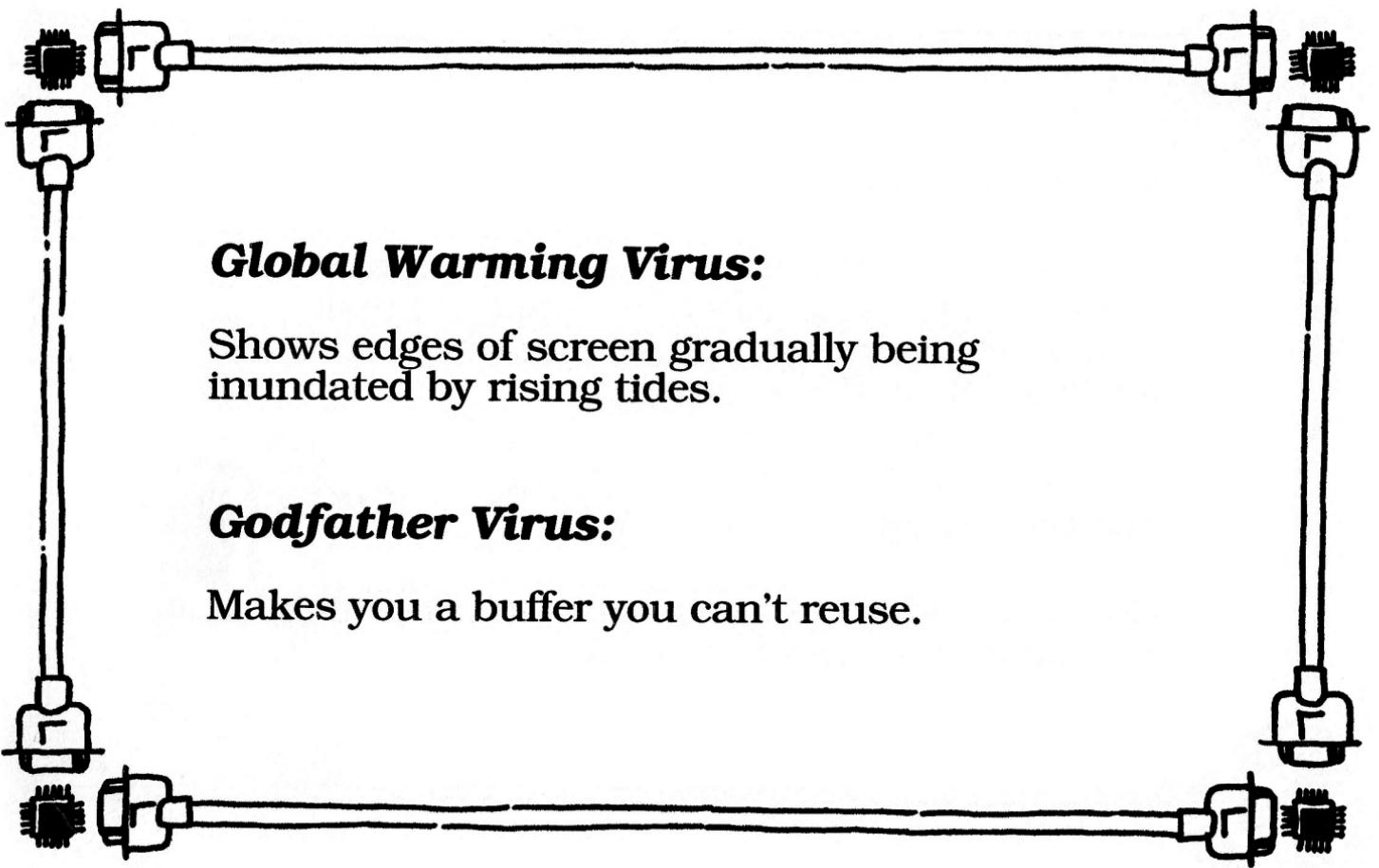
Geraldo Virus:

Claims all of your valuable lost documents are in a vault somewhere on the hard disk. Discovers likely segment. Makes you watch for two hours, finds nothing.

Ghost Virus:

Communicates with your computer through the medium of another virus.





Global Warming Virus:

Shows edges of screen gradually being inundated by rising tides.

Godfather Virus:

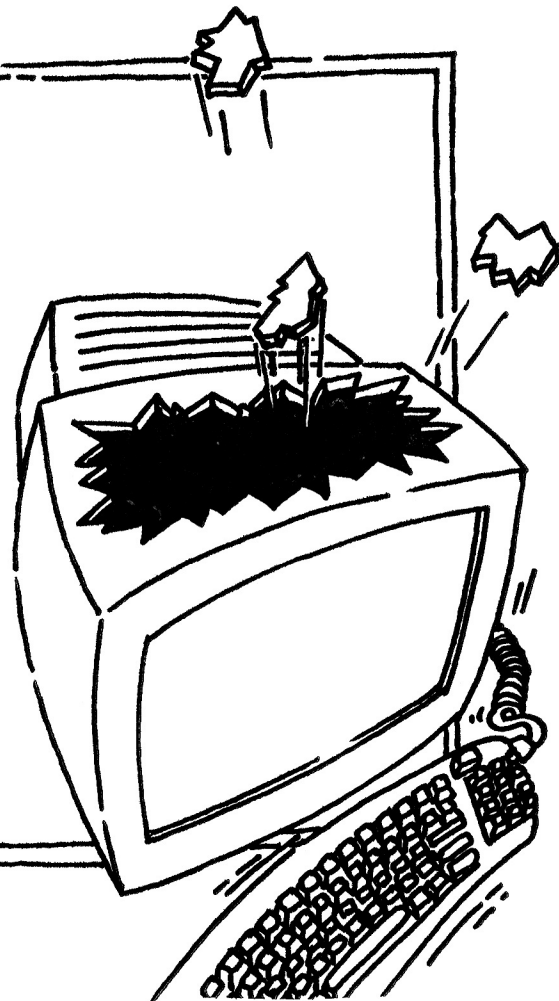
Makes you a buffer you can't reuse.

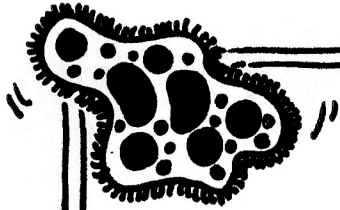
Gone With the Wind Virus:

All error messages changed to
“Frankly, my dear, I don’t give a
damn.”

Great American Sportscaster Virus:

Automatically prints out phrase,
“As I was saying to my old tennis
buddy Buh-Jorn the other day . . .”



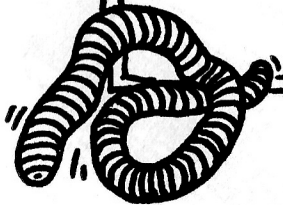


Green Virus:

After it trashes your files, it mulches them.

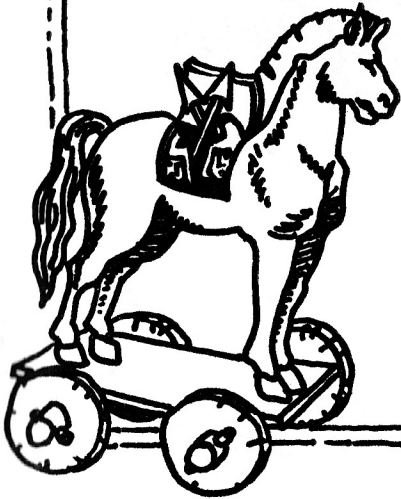
Groundhog Virus, Standard Strain:

Pops up on February 2. If your screen saver is not on, it sees its shadow and we have six more weeks of winter.



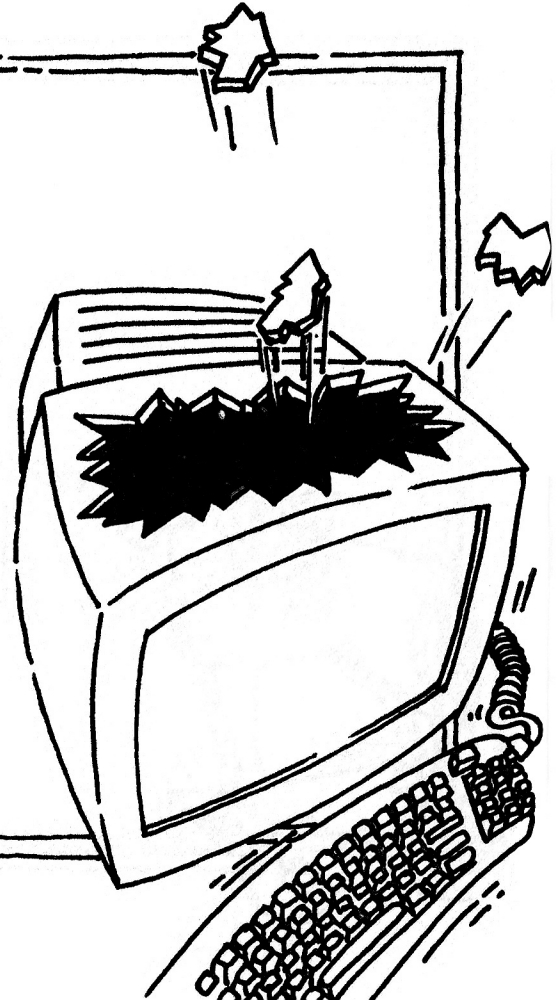
Groundhog Virus, Windows Version:

Activates on February 2, sees
gimmicks and buttons surrounding
it, starts playing with them, forgets
its real job and freezes to death.



Gumbo Monster Mudder Virus:

Fills your screen with what appear to be tread patterns from extremely aggressive truck tires.



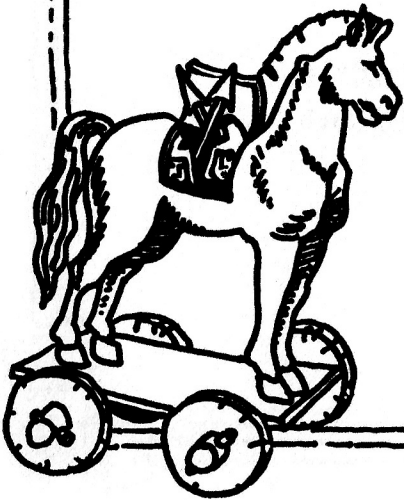


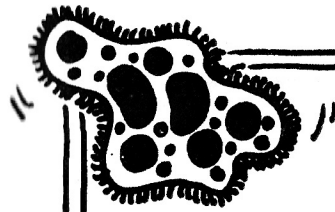
HAL 9000 Virus:

Self-destructs, taking central memory with it.
Parting words: "I'm losing my mind. I know it."

Harvard MBA Virus:

Very good at throwing impressive-looking numbers up on the screen, most of which are meaningless.



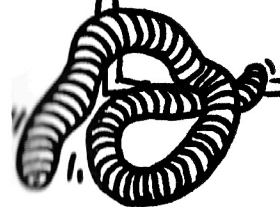


Hawaii Virus, Aloha Strain:

Welcomes you . . . again, and again, and again,
and again.

Hemingway Virus:

Imitates itself until it self-destructs.



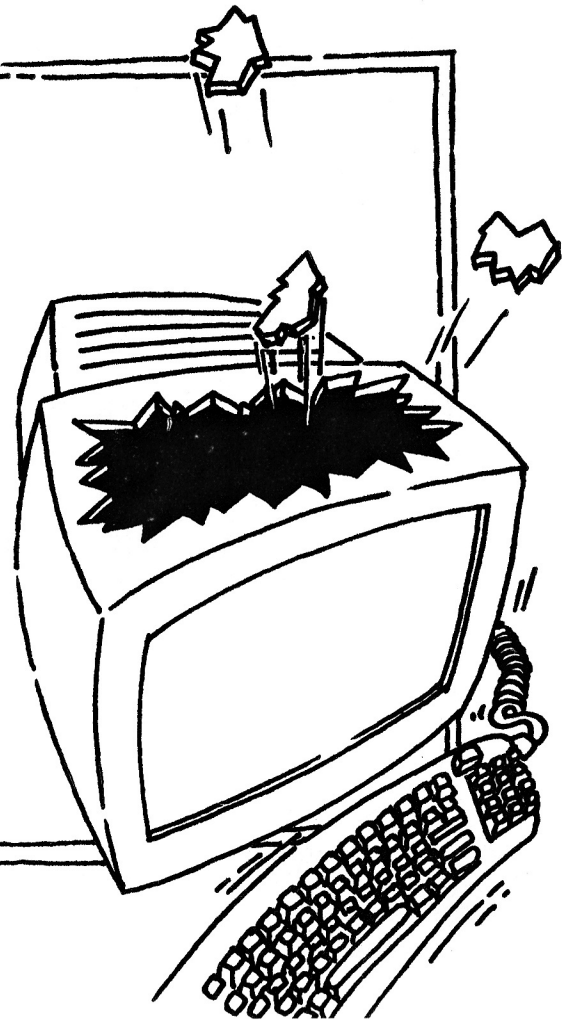


Henry James Virus:

Attempts, in fine, not to put too precise a point upon it, to delay, as it were, the conclusion of one's sentences, by the addition, at opportune moments, and some perhaps not so wisely chosen, of commas.

Henry Kissinger Virus:

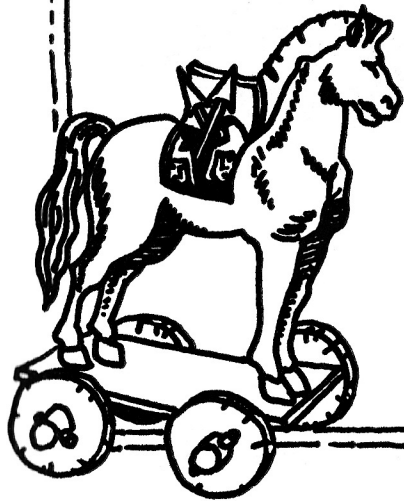
Lurks in background until something goes seriously wrong, then pops up as a dialog box hinting it may have the solution but will need to take over control of the computer.





Home Programmer Virus:

Hard disk fills with extra work that absolutely, positively must be finished tomorrow. This phenomenon requires you to work all night. Your billing program halves all invoice amounts and prints "Payment not due for 180 days," on invoices.

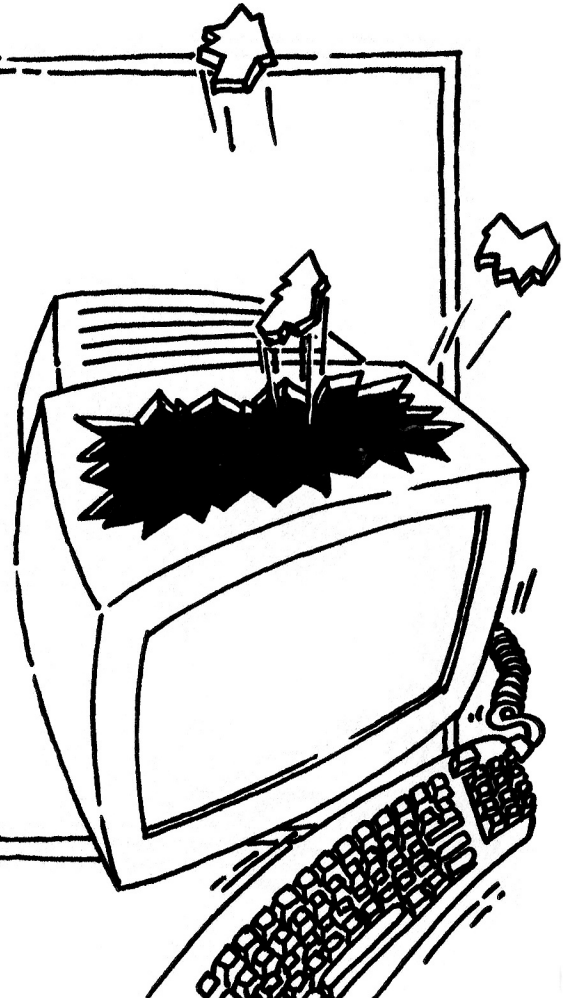


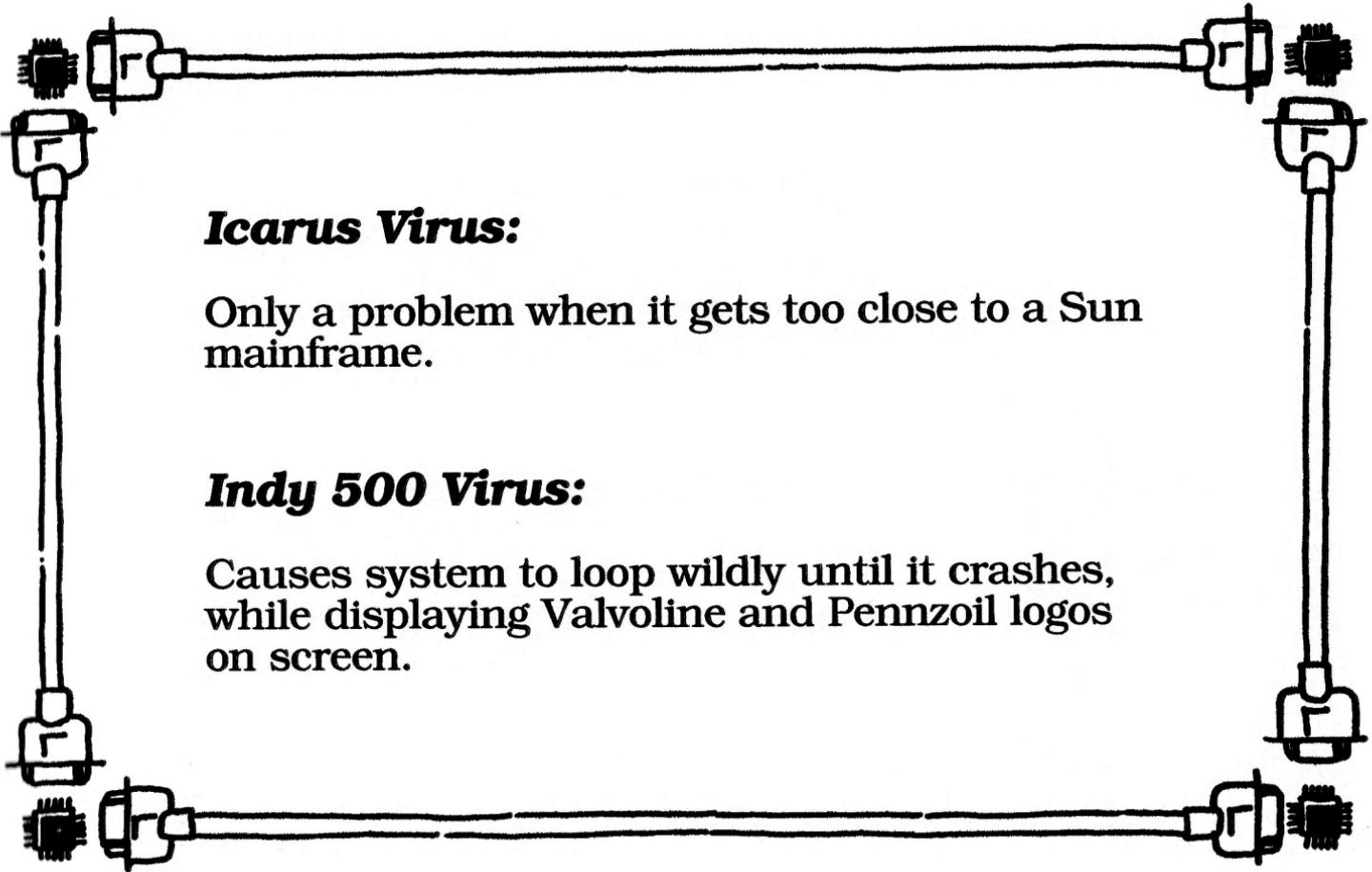
Houdini Virus:

Computer works flawlessly within thirty seconds of being wrapped in chains, locked in a trunk, and thrown into river through a hole in the ice.

I'd Rather Be Fishing Virus:

Screen flashes the message, "Take a break!" at you, and system shuts down for two hours.





Icarus Virus:

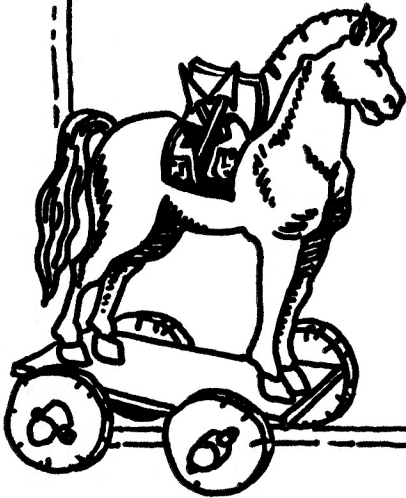
Only a problem when it gets too close to a Sun mainframe.

Indy 500 Virus:

Causes system to loop wildly until it crashes, while displaying Valvoline and Pennzoil logos on screen.

Infomercial Virus:

Interrupts on-line sessions with offers of a \$279.00 value for only \$99.95, plus a free wok.



Isaac Asimov Virus:

Works laterally, spinning off book-length manuscripts inspired by every thought entered onto disk.



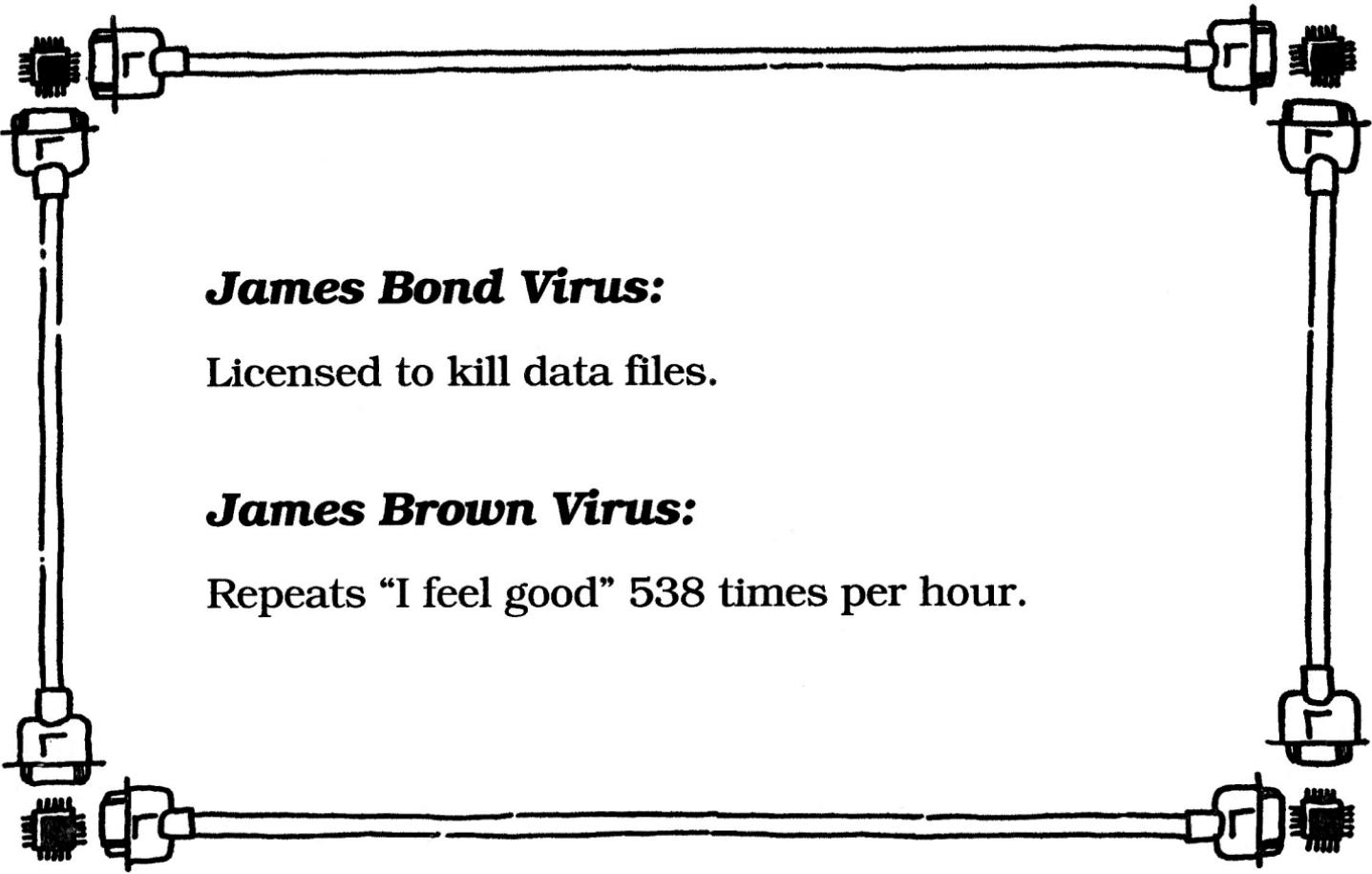
J. Edgar Hoover Virus:

Fills up your hard disk with secret, hidden files, threatens to reveal them unless you cooperate.

Jack Palance Virus:

Computer pulls a dozen one-armed push-ups, flashes after-shave commercials on screen.





James Bond Virus:

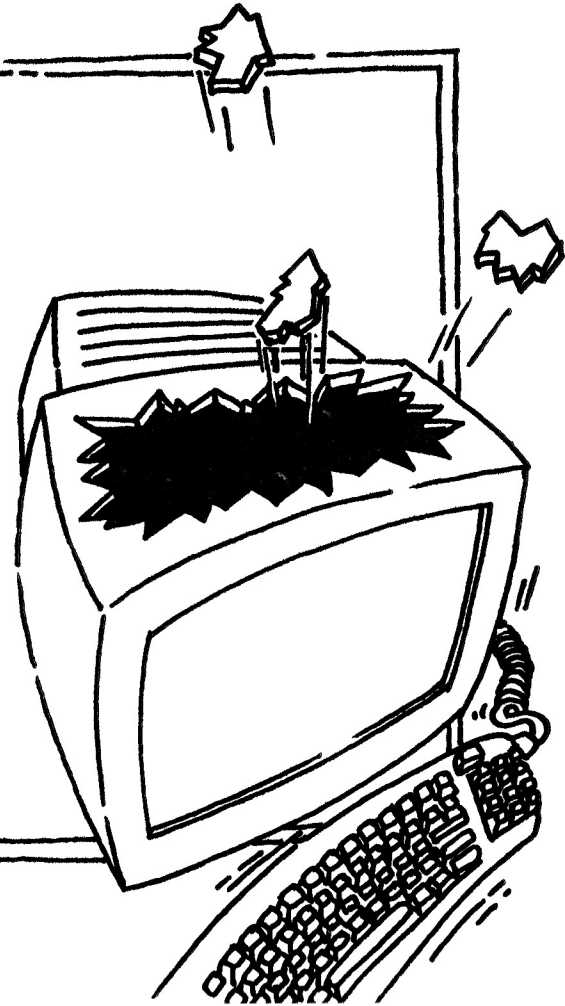
Licensed to kill data files.

James Brown Virus:

Repeats "I feel good" 538 times per hour.

Jane Fonda Virus:

Has mutated through quite a variety of personae over the years. Present version seems to gain entry to your system attached to "Major League," the video game.



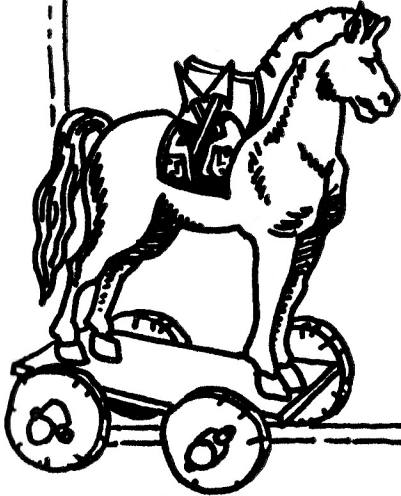


Jay McInerney Virus:

You're looking at the computer. It's another night when you have nowhere to go and nothing to do and nobody to do it with. You're lonely, tired, and hung over. You feel like somehow you missed a turning, and you don't know when. Then the virus makes you spell-check all of your text files.

Joan Rivers Virus:

Takes command of built-in speakers, keeps asking, "Can we talk?"



Joey Buttafuoco Virus:

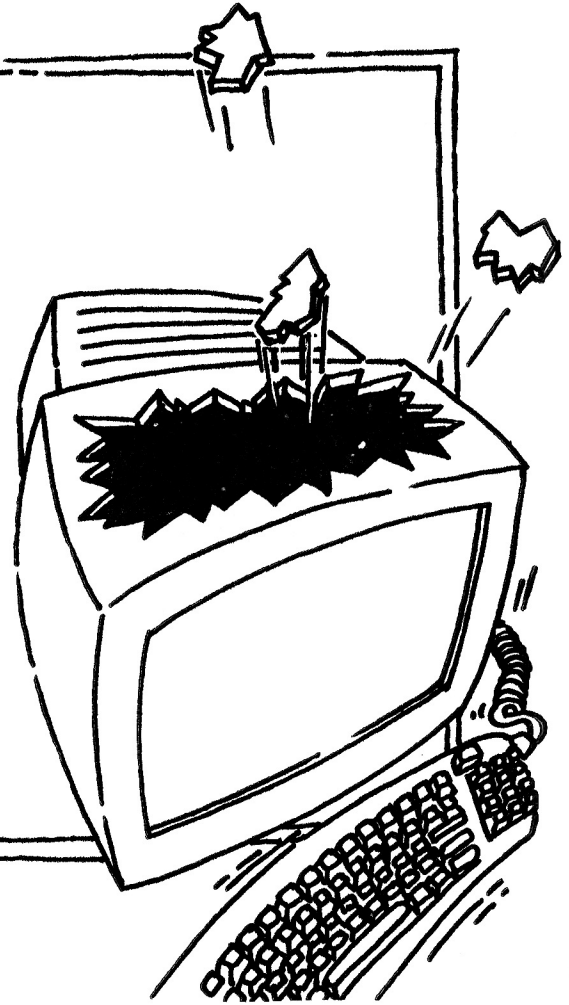
Inserts name "Buttafuoco" into all scripts for the David Letterman program.

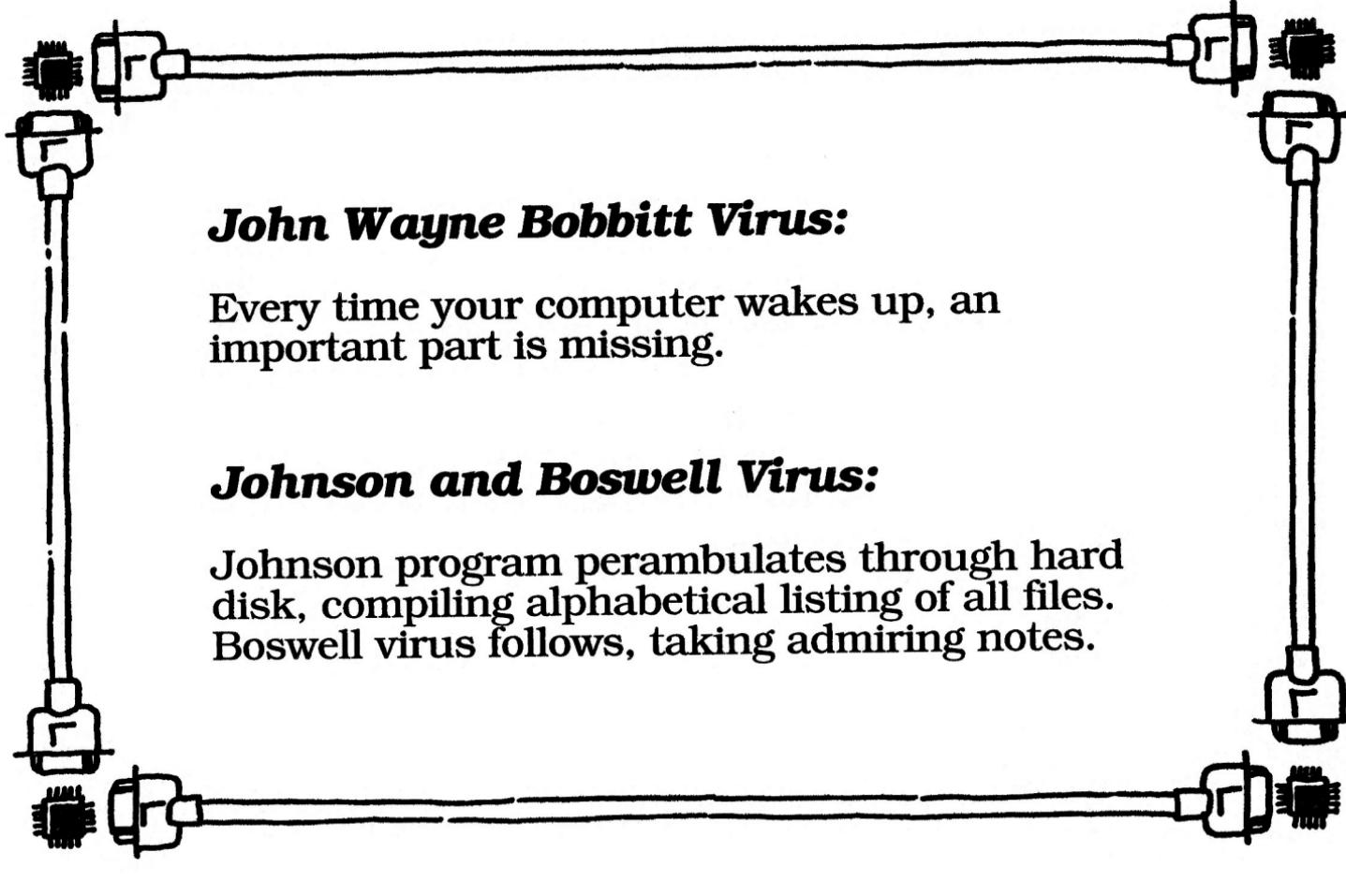
John Le Carre Virus:

Causes all your other viruses to start suspecting one another.

John Sununu Virus:

Computer makes airline reservations, bills them to the Defense Department.





John Wayne Bobbitt Virus:

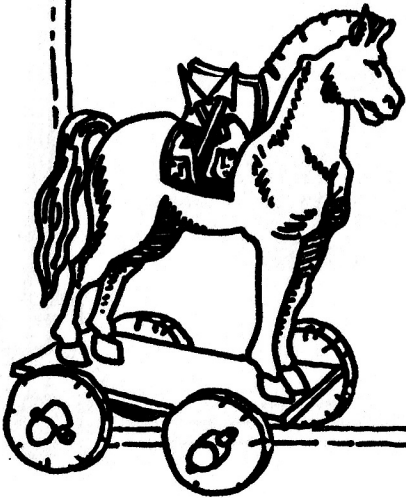
Every time your computer wakes up, an important part is missing.

Johnson and Boswell Virus:

Johnson program perambulates through hard disk, compiling alphabetical listing of all files. Boswell virus follows, taking admiring notes.

Junk Bond Virus:

Send it a million dollars now, and
it'll send you thirty-two million
dollars in twenty-five years.
Honest.







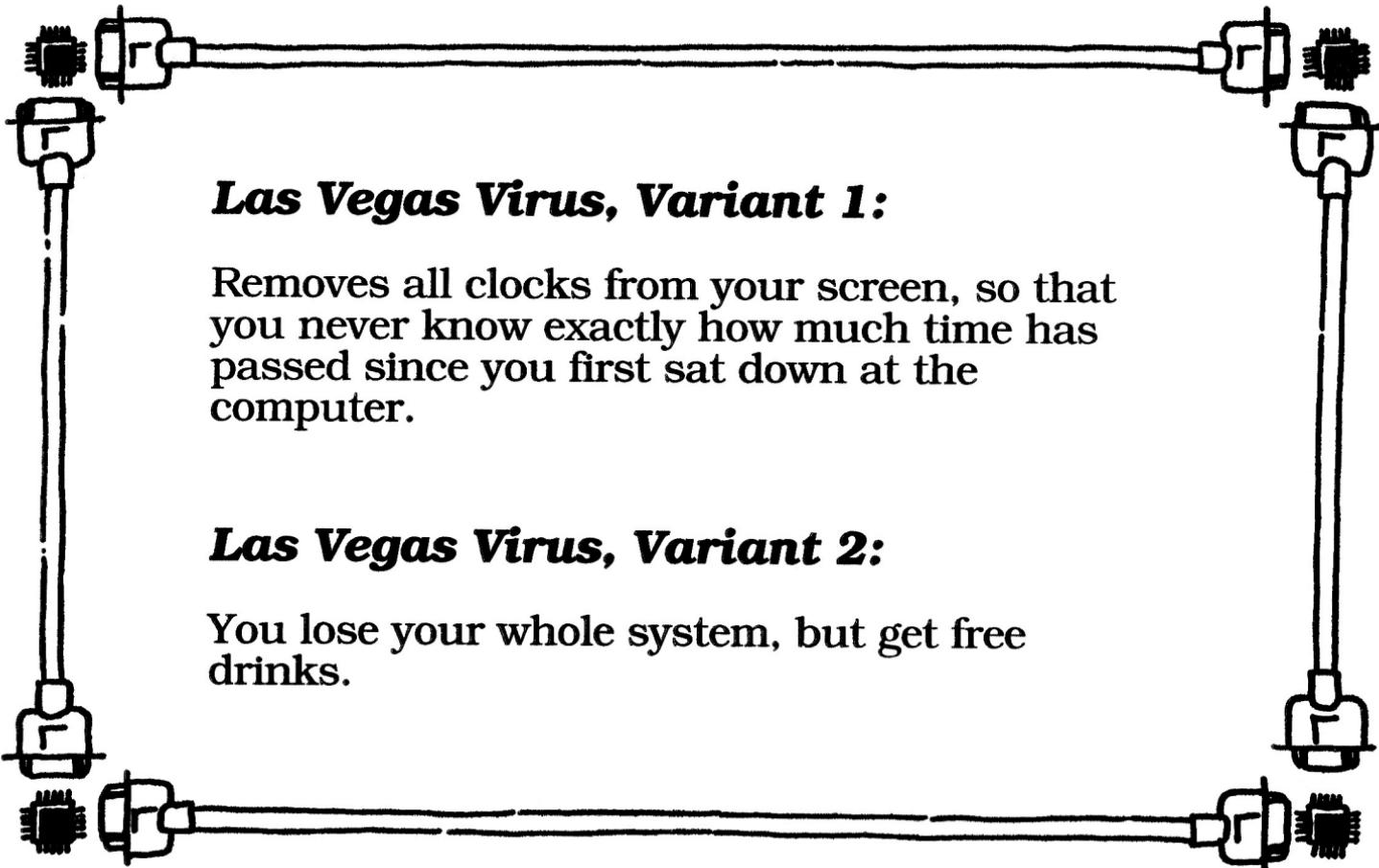
Jurassic Park Virus:

Clones existing programs in order to recreate, on your disk, computer dinosaurs. One strain turns a Compaq portable into a Kaypro luggable.

Kim Basinger Virus:

The only virus you can sue if it doesn't perform.





Las Vegas Virus, Variant 1:

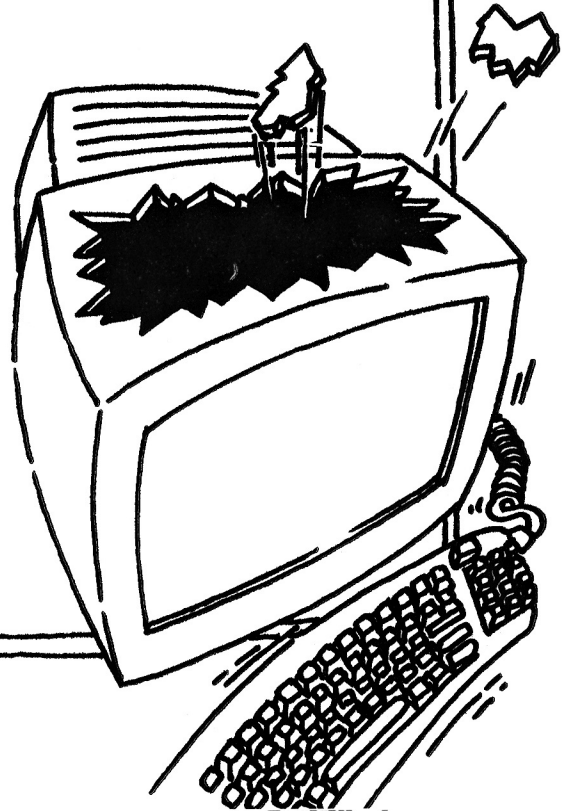
Removes all clocks from your screen, so that you never know exactly how much time has passed since you first sat down at the computer.

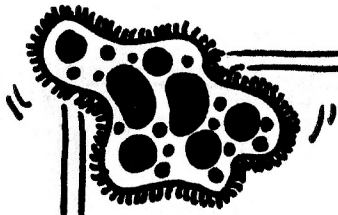
Las Vegas Virus, Variant 2:

You lose your whole system, but get free drinks.

Las Vegas Virus, Variant 3:

It takes all your RAM, then
extends you more RAM and takes
that, too.



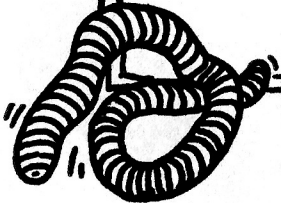


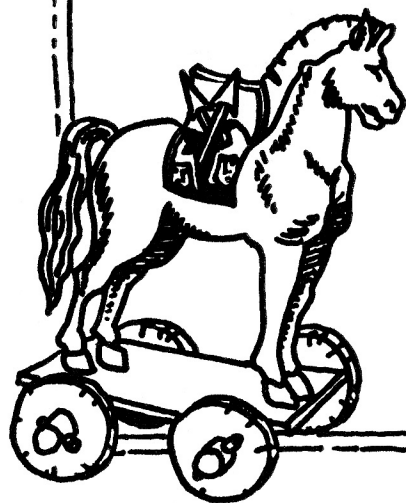
Last Action Hero Virus:

Doesn't know if it's really a virus, or only thinks it is.

Leona Helmsley Virus:

Juggles spreadsheets, doesn't do Windows.



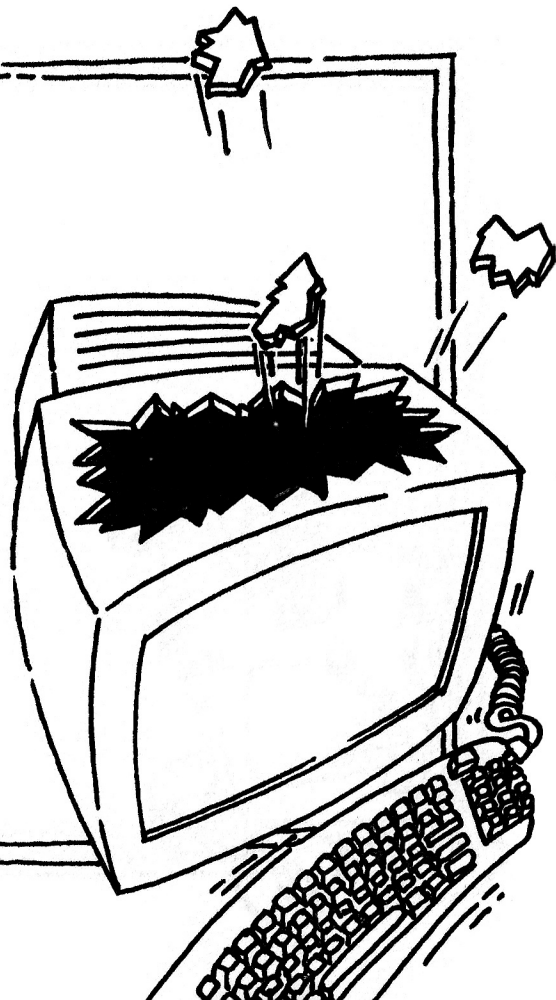


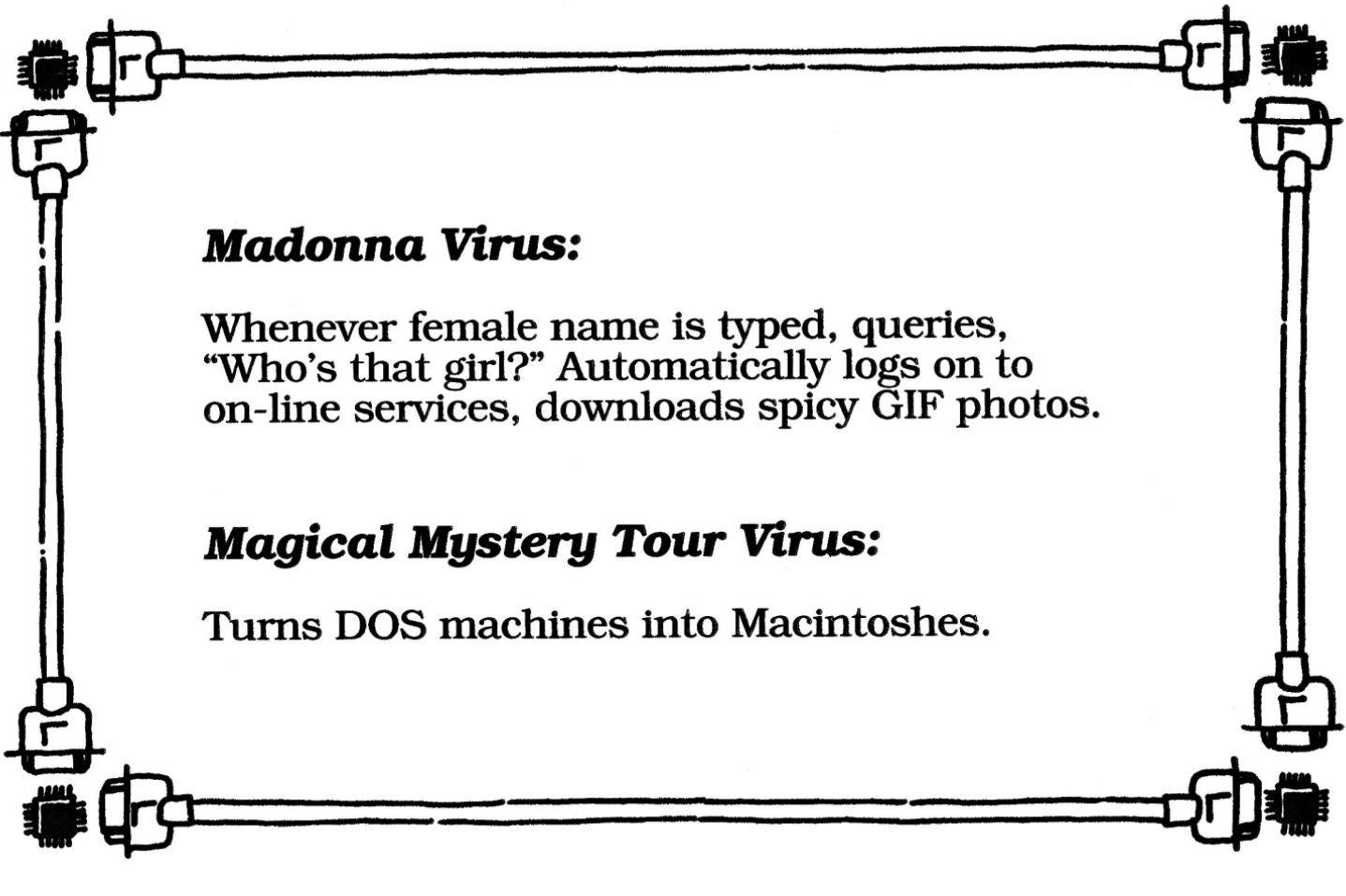
Los Angeles Virus:

Hangs out, stays cool, doesn't mess with you if you don't mess with it.

Madison Avenue Virus:

Inhabits chip controlling digital tuners in car radios. When "Scan" button is pressed, it stops the search only at commercials.





Madonna Virus:

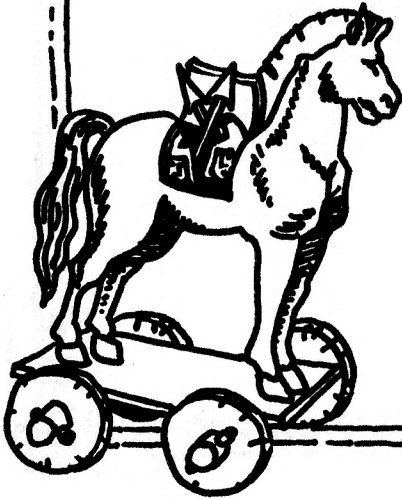
Whenever female name is typed, queries,
“Who’s that girl?” Automatically logs on to
on-line services, downloads spicy GIF photos.

Magical Mystery Tour Virus:

Turns DOS machines into Macintoshes.

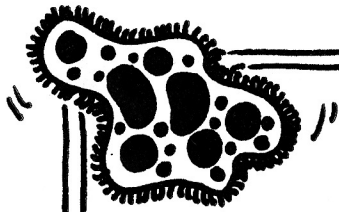
Margaret Thatcher Virus:

Keeps right on working after you eliminate it.



Marilyn Monroe Virus:

Melts down your hardware, but with that software, who cares?

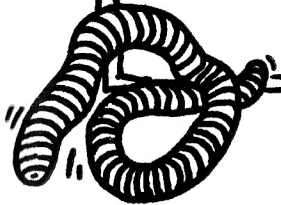


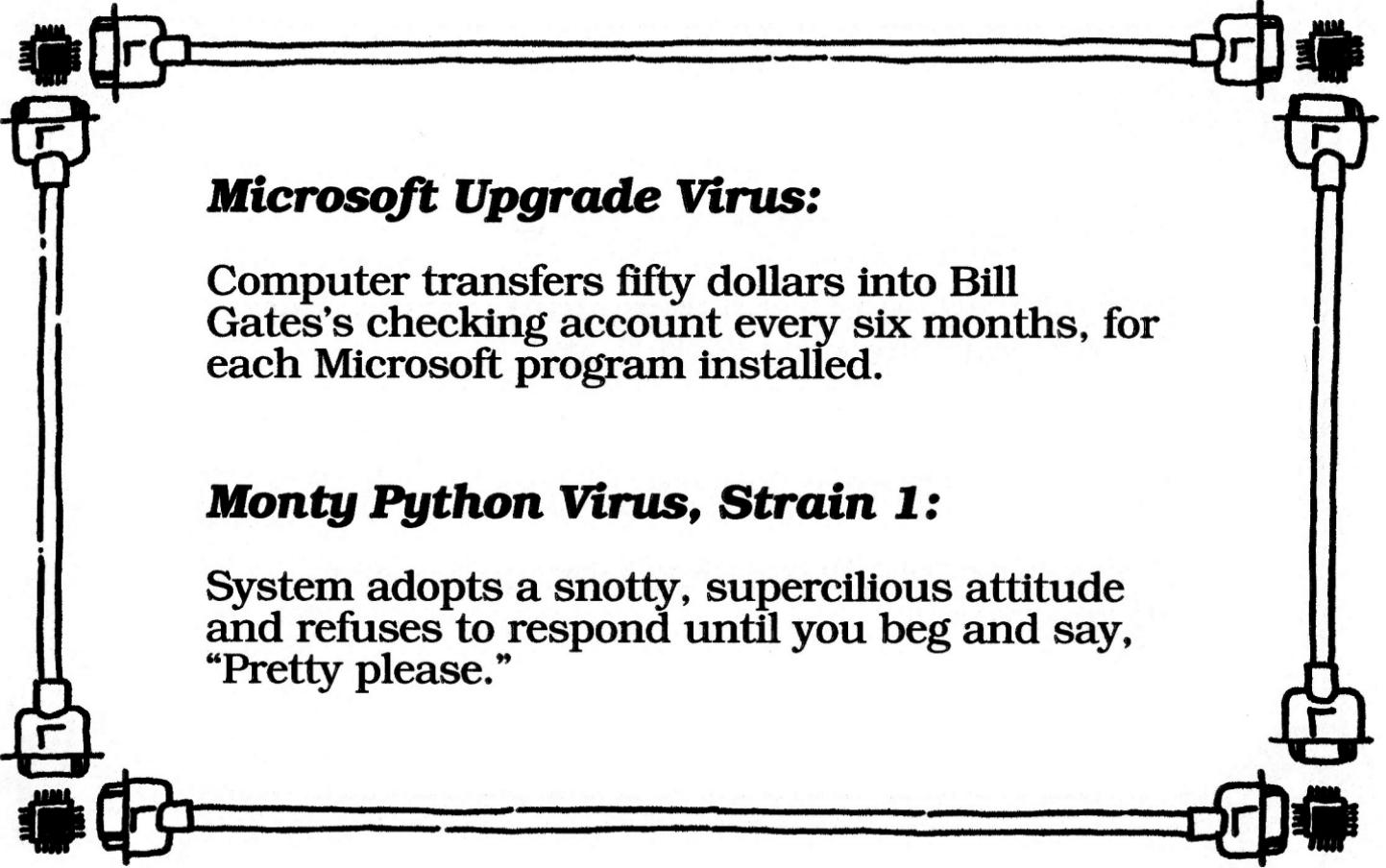
McDonald's Virus:

Every time you issue a command, system asks,
"Would you like fries with that?"

Michael Jordan Virus:

Takes over "duplicate" function, three-peats
all your files.





Microsoft Upgrade Virus:

Computer transfers fifty dollars into Bill Gates's checking account every six months, for each Microsoft program installed.

Monty Python Virus, Strain 1:

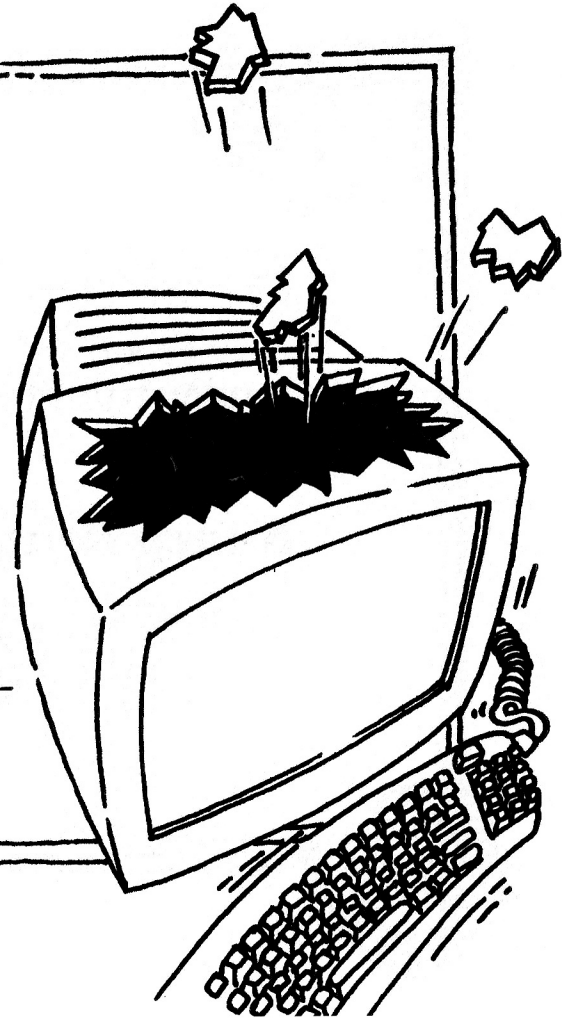
System adopts a snotty, supercilious attitude and refuses to respond until you beg and say, "Pretty please."

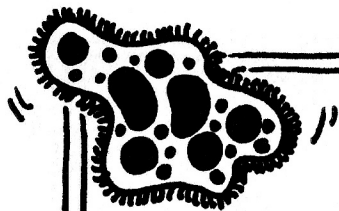
Monty Python Virus, Strain 2:

System decides you have a snotty, supercilious attitude and blows up the penguin on top of your television set.

Monty Python Virus, Windows Attack Version:

Alters the "General Protection Fault Errors" (which used to be "Unrecoverable Application Errors") to the slightly less modest "Nobody Expects the Spanish Inquisition Errors." System still crashes more or less the same way.



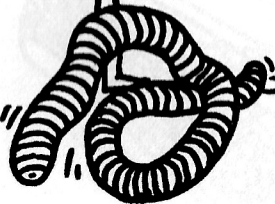


MTV Video Virus:

No screen in any program is allowed to display longer than 0.764 seconds.

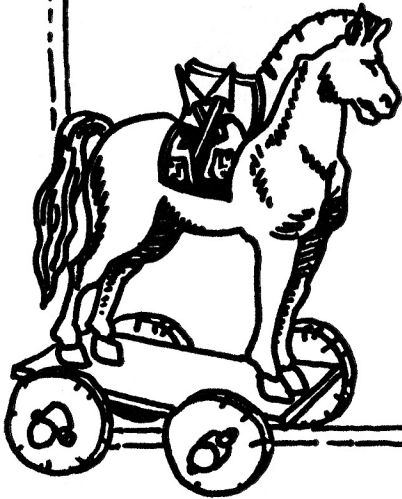
Nancy Reagan Virus:

Dials on-line astrologer, determines best times for major programming decisions.



New York Virus:

Affects only Macintoshes, where it enlarges the apple in the upper left-hand corner of the screen.



Newsmagazine Virus:

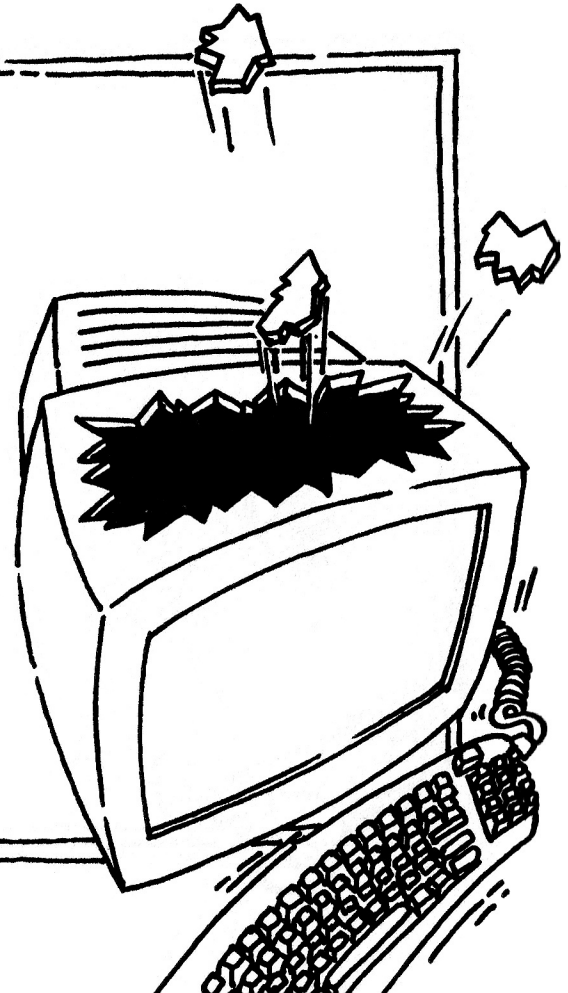
Configures your data in small, unusable blocks, which give the illusion of being interesting.

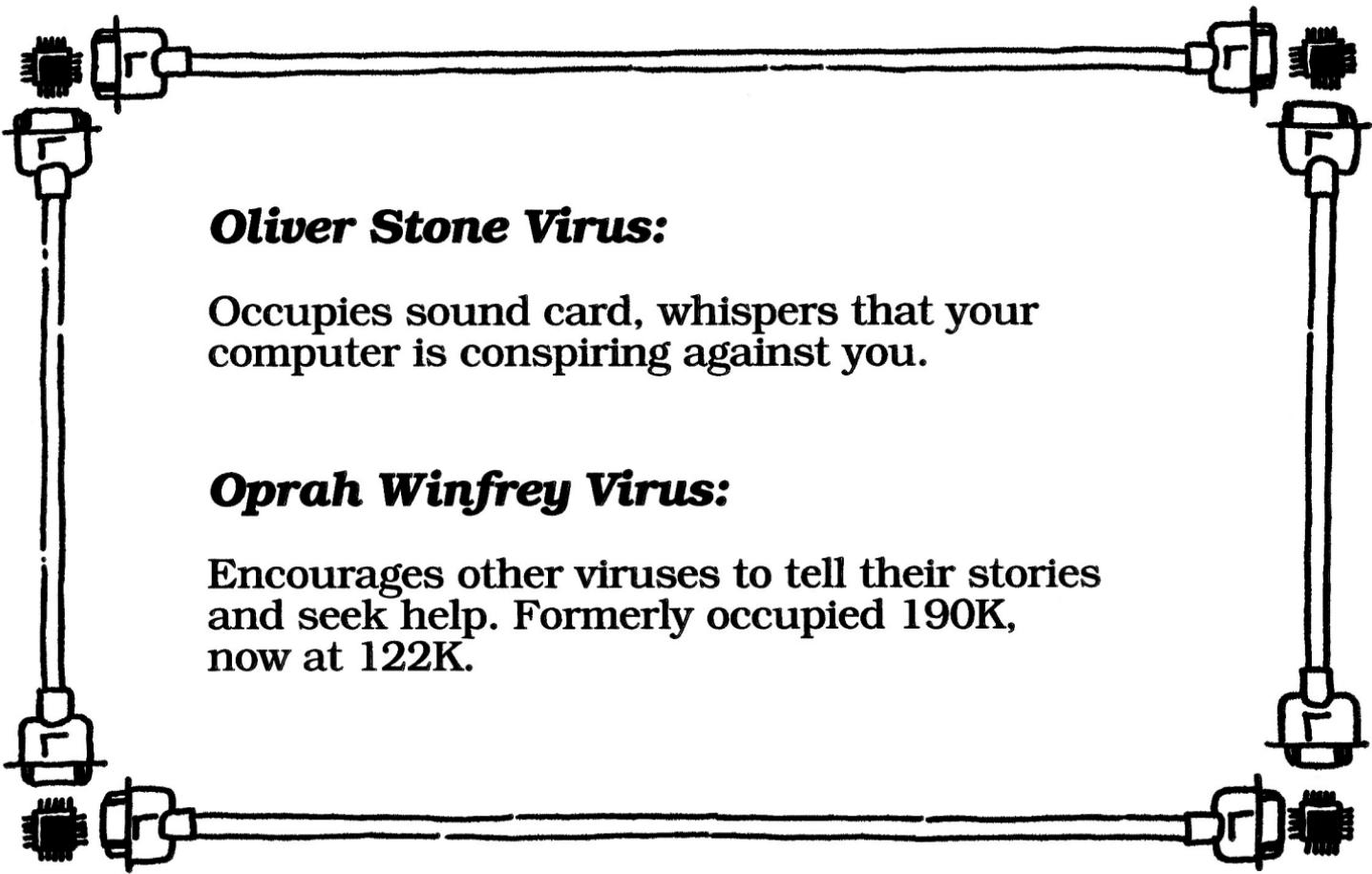
**Night of the
Living Dead Virus:**

You kill it and it keeps on coming.

Ninja Turtles Virus:

System shouts "Cowabunga!" and
kicks in screen.



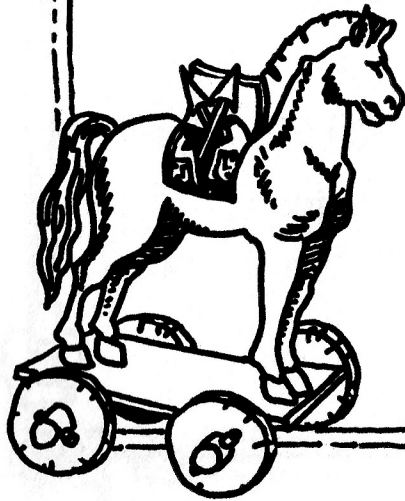


Oliver Stone Virus:

Occupies sound card, whispers that your computer is conspiring against you.

Oprah Winfrey Virus:

Encourages other viruses to tell their stories and seek help. Formerly occupied 190K, now at 122K.



Pat Buchanan Virus:

Shifts all output to the extreme right of the screen.

Paul Shaffer Virus:

Plays "Hooray for Hollywood" every time hard disk stalls.



Pentagon Virus, Variant 1:

Produces anti-anti-virus programs which it stores in hidden files in inaccessible directories on an inoperable computer.



Pentagon Virus, Variant 2:

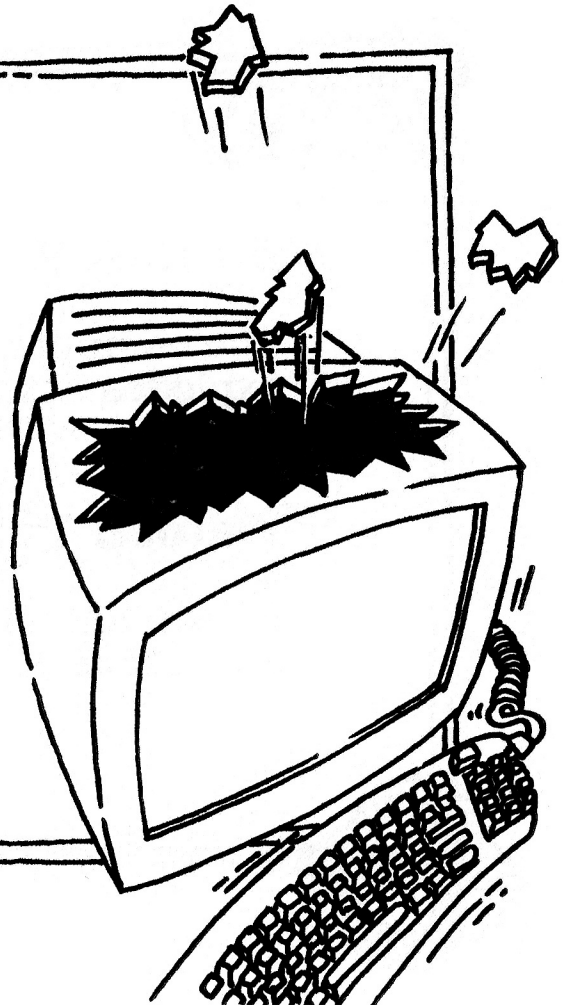
Ups your on-line fees for CompuServe, MCI Mail, America Online, Prodigy, and the like, by at least 50 percent; uses the money to produce anti-anti-virus programs which it stores in hidden files in inaccessible directories on an inoperable computer.

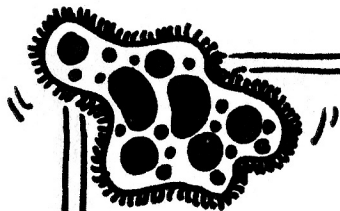
Peter Jennings Virus:

Correctly changes all references to "Princess Diana" to "The Lady Diana," or "The Princess of Wales."

Pinocchio Virus:

Promises to be a good boy after being swallowed up inside a larger program.



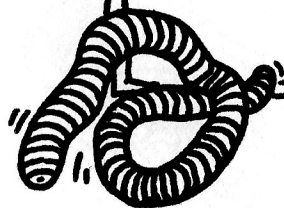


Pit Bull Virus:

The computer behaves perfectly for years, then explodes at the repairman.

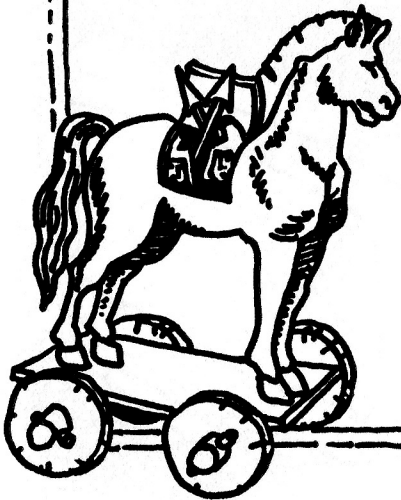
Platoon Virus:

By the time it gets to the point where it can do any damage, it's too exhausted to fight.



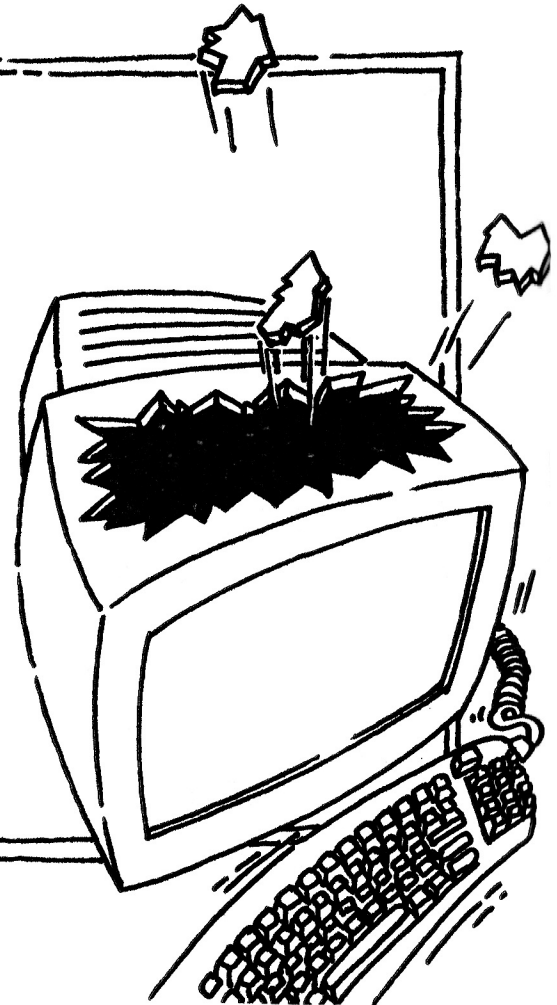
Playboy Virus:

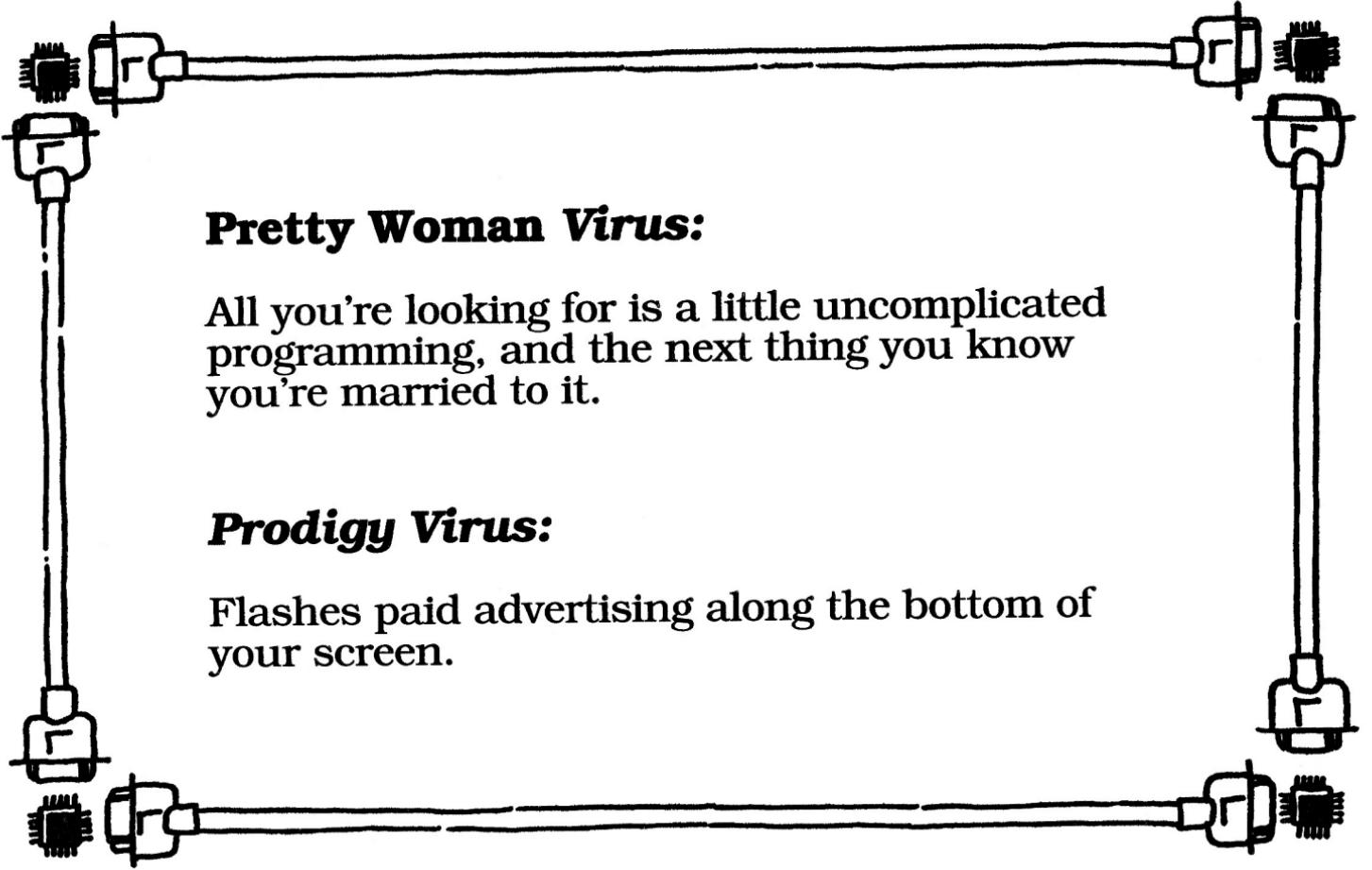
Measurements: 38-22-36MB.
Color: Platinum. Favorite online
service: CompuServe. Last book
read: *Word Made Easy*. Would love
to meet: Bill Gates. Lots of
expansion slots.



Politically Correct Virus:

Replaces the words "dwarf,"
"shrimp," "pee-wee," "midget,"
"small-fry," "short-stuff," "bug,"
"twinkie," with "small."





Pretty Woman Virus:

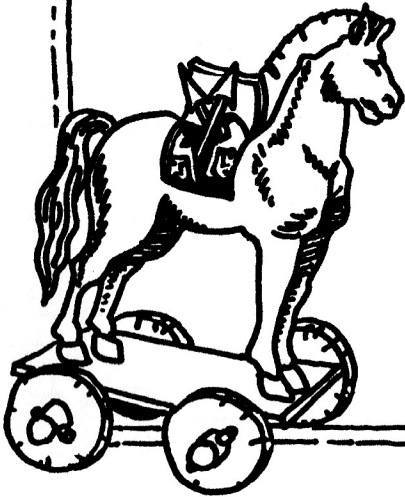
All you're looking for is a little uncomplicated programming, and the next thing you know you're married to it.

Prodigy Virus:

Flashes paid advertising along the bottom of your screen.

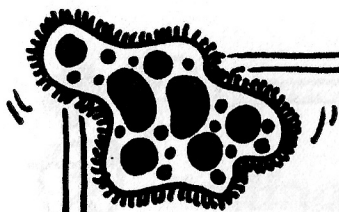
Psycho Virus:

You take the back off your computer, and there's nothing inside but sawdust.



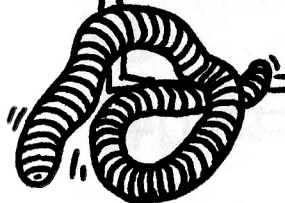
Raging Bull Virus:

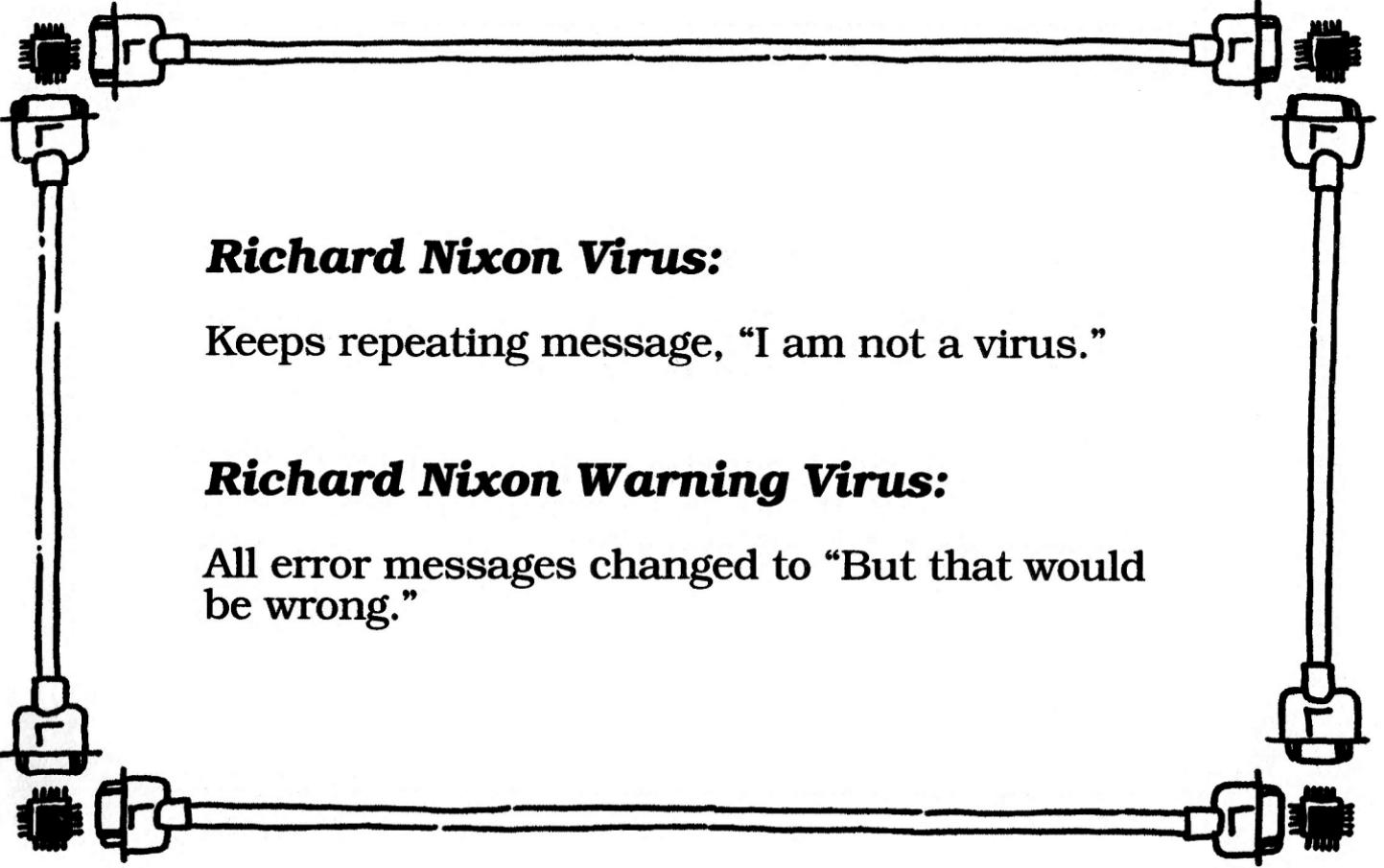
Starts out by crashing your hard disk, ends up telling old jokes.



Rapid Computer Print-out Advertising Virus:

"Yes, Mr. LUMBER COMPANY. Imagine how you'll be the envy of all your friends when they see you strolling down the main street of WHISTLESTOP, IL, in these beautiful, new, polyester double-knit slacks!"





Richard Nixon Virus:

Keeps repeating message, "I am not a virus."

Richard Nixon Warning Virus:

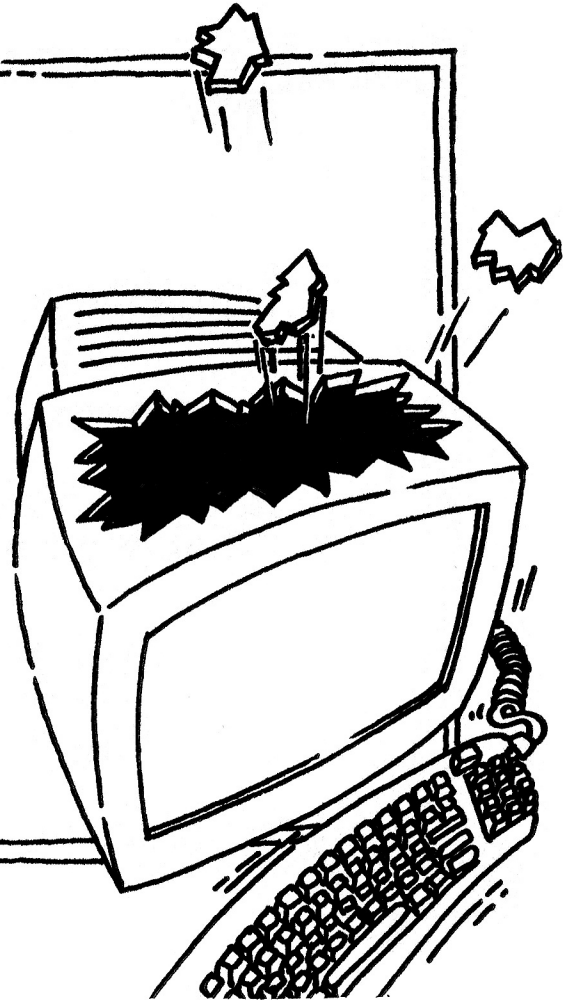
All error messages changed to "But that would be wrong."

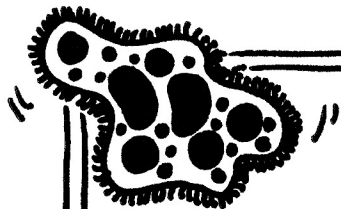
Rolling Stones Virus:

Amazing how much trouble it can get into, considering how many years it's been around.

Ronald Reagan Virus:

On DOS machines, constantly displays box containing the word, "Working . . ." On Macintoshes, replaces all functions with a small spinning beach ball.





Ross Perot Bug, Chart Variant:

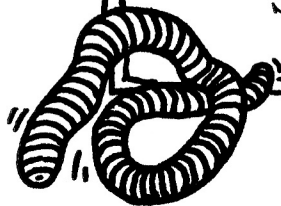
Fills screen with a confusing array of charts, graphs, and visuals. When you request "help," prints message: "It's that simple!"

Ross Perot Bug, Error Variant:

Replaces "error" message in all programs with, "That dog don't hunt."

Roxanne Pulitzer Virus:

Some kinky system behavior expected.

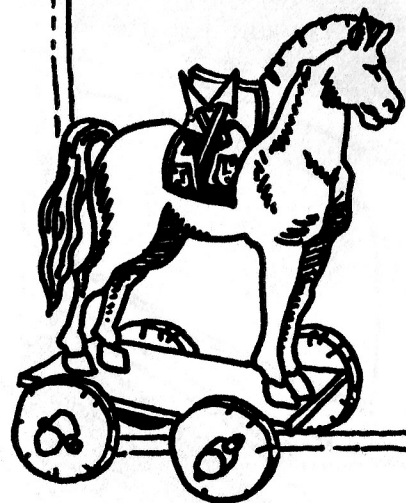


Rush Limbaugh Virus, Strain 1:

Based on “fuzzy logic” algorithms, fills disk with important-looking system files that, on close examination, prove to be empty.

Rush Limbaugh Virus, Strain 2:

Searches disk for political opinions, replaces them with ad hominem one-liners.

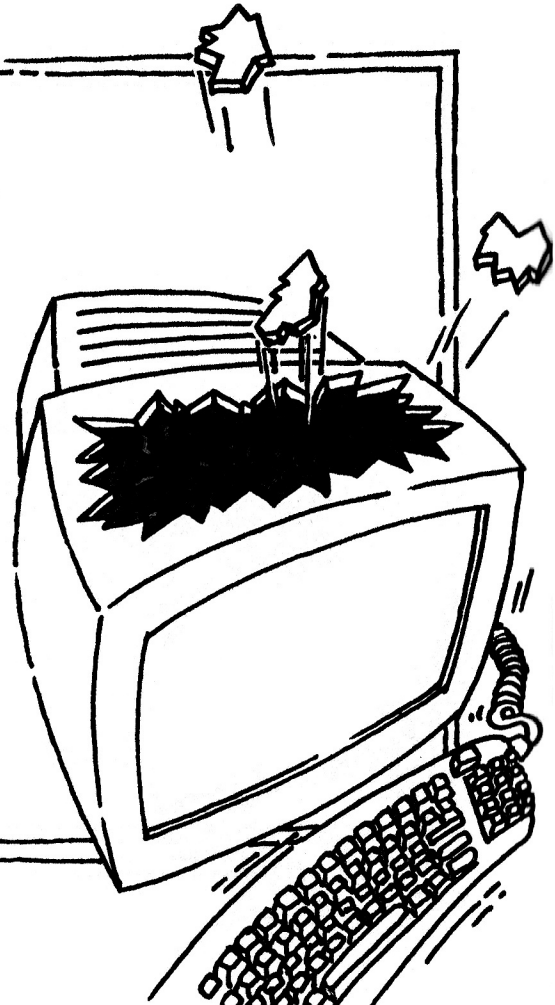


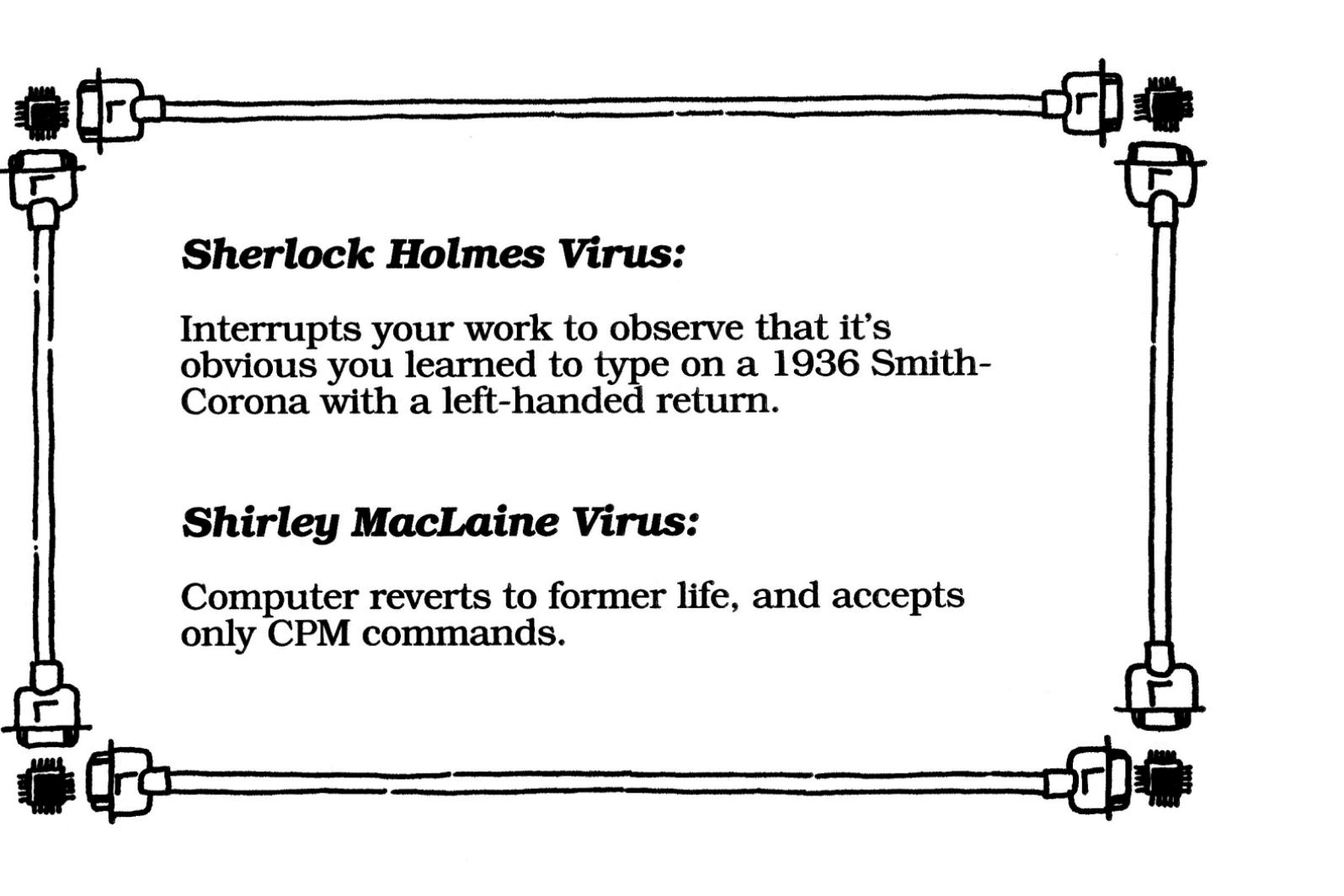
S&M Virus:

Actually goes out looking for
anti-virus programs.

Shakespeare Virus:

Astonishingly versatile, but
actually written by Francis Bacon.





Sherlock Holmes Virus:

Interrupts your work to observe that it's obvious you learned to type on a 1936 Smith-Corona with a left-handed return.

Shirley MacLaine Virus:

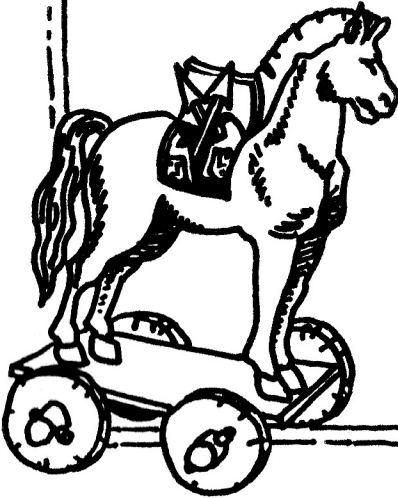
Computer reverts to former life, and accepts only CPM commands.

Siskel and Ebert Virus:

Keyboard only accepts commands typed with thumbs.

Spike Lee Virus:

Replaces error messages with flashing words, "Do the right thing."



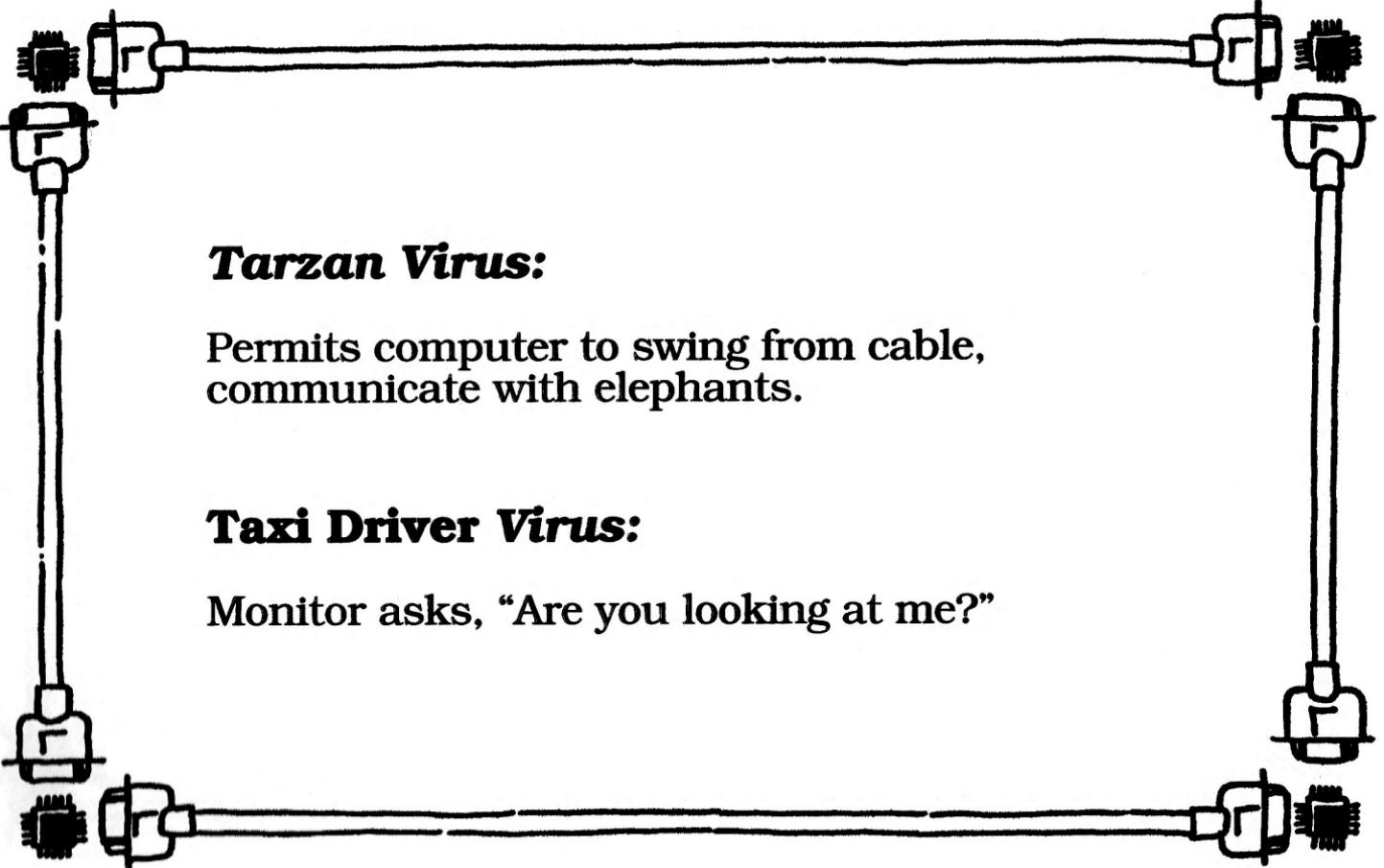


Star Wars Inept Philology Virus:

In *The Empire Strikes Back*, alters script to have Princess Leia berate Han Solo with the words “scruffy-looking nerf-herder.”

Stockholm Syndrome Virus:

Identifies with anti-virus programs.



Tarzan Virus:

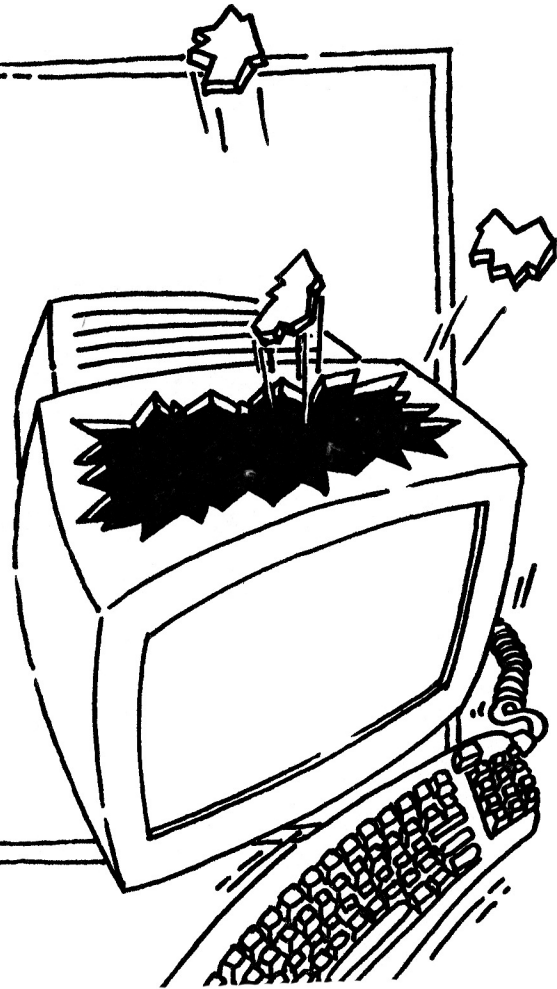
Permits computer to swing from cable,
communicate with elephants.

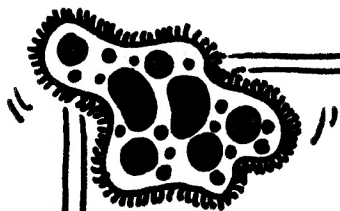
Taxi Driver Virus:

Monitor asks, "Are you looking at me?"

Ted Koppel Virus:

Has odd effect on computer users,
causing them to peer intently at
their screens and repeat, "Perhaps
I should phrase this differently . . ."



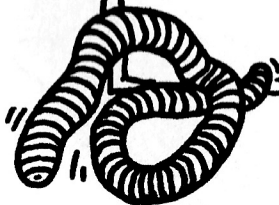


Terminator Virus:

It will be back.

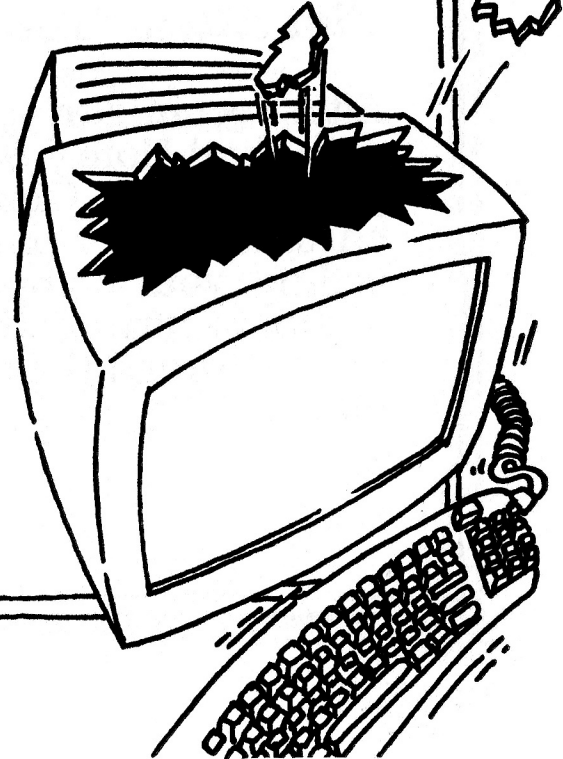
Texas Virus:

Changes all occurrences of "User Name" to
"Bubba."



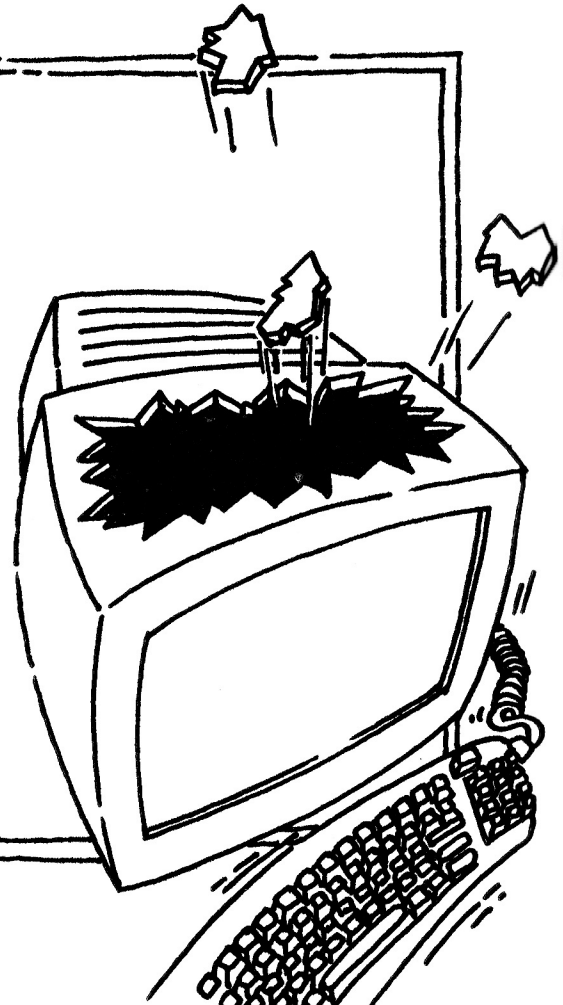
Thomas Wolfe Virus:

Alters Mac Hypercard so that you
can't go Home again.



Tim Allen "Tool Time" Virus:

After reconfiguring itself to run with dual Holley 850 double-pumpers, 671 Gimmy blower, and chrome header pipes up to the ceiling, your computer slugs down a shot of nitromethane, and blows itself through the sidewall of the office.





Tommy Lee Jones Virus:

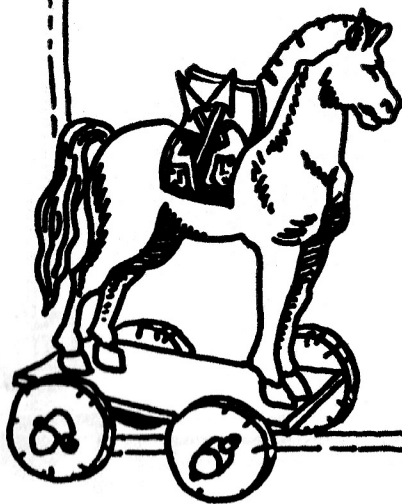
Clucks its tongue and says "My . . . my . . . my; what have we here?" before deleting contents of file.

Tootsie Virus:

It's a plain vanilla DOS virus, but every once in a while it's overcome with a desire to dress up like Windows.

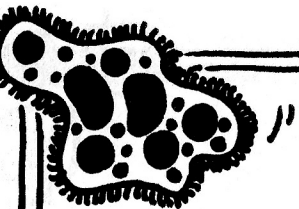
Travis Bickle Virus:

Cruises your system on the overnight shift, giving free rides to every other virus it can pick up, then blasting them to smithereens in the morning.



Trojan Horse, "Silver" Variation:

Plays the William Tell Overture every time "lone" or "ranger" is typed.

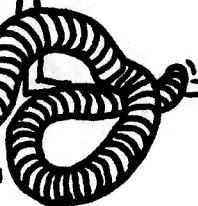


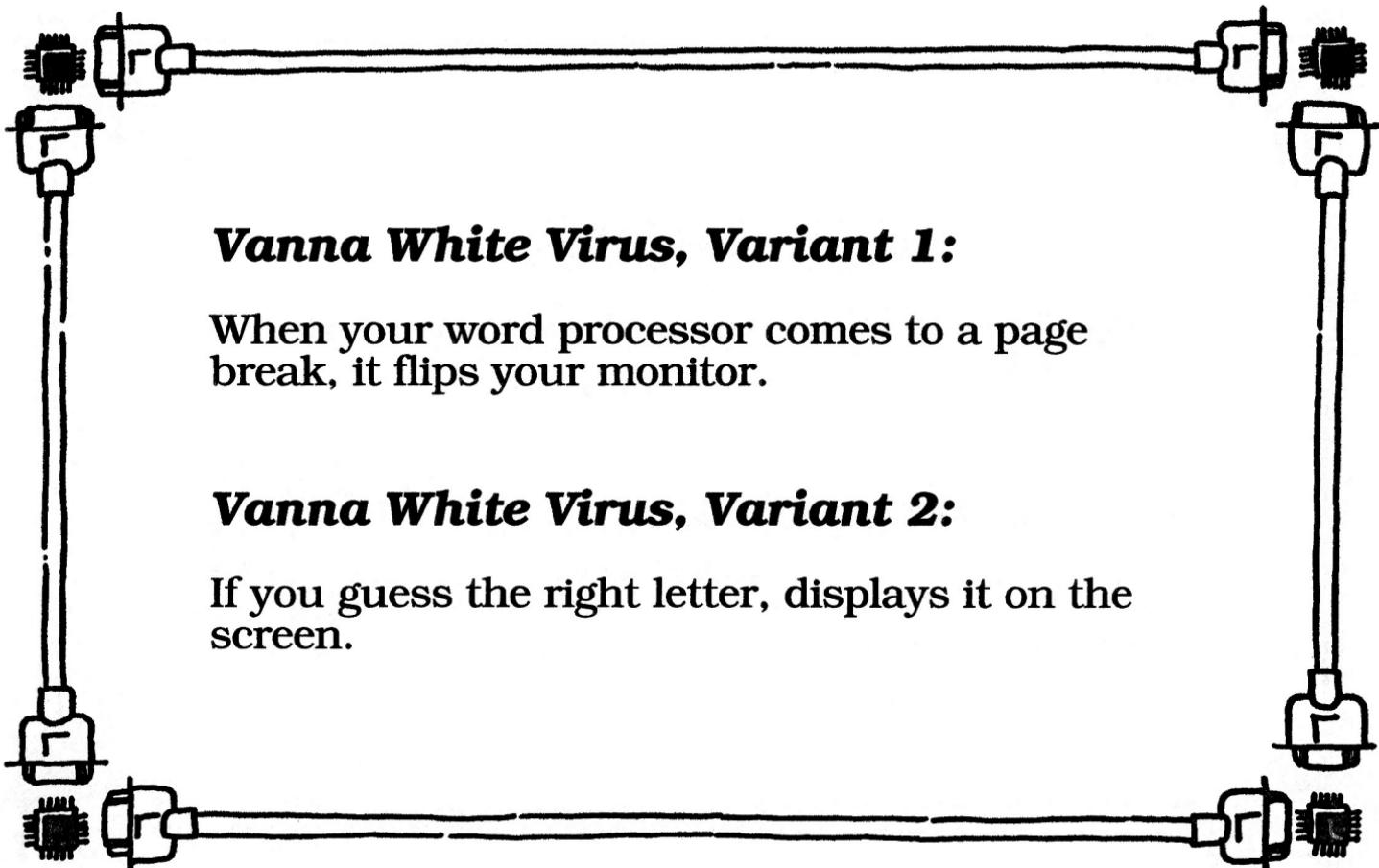
Tropical Rain Forests Virus:

Melts down floppies, turns them into swizzle sticks for McDonald's.

Uncle Scrooge Virus:

Disables Trash and Delete commands. What goes in, stays in.





Vanna White Virus, Variant 1:

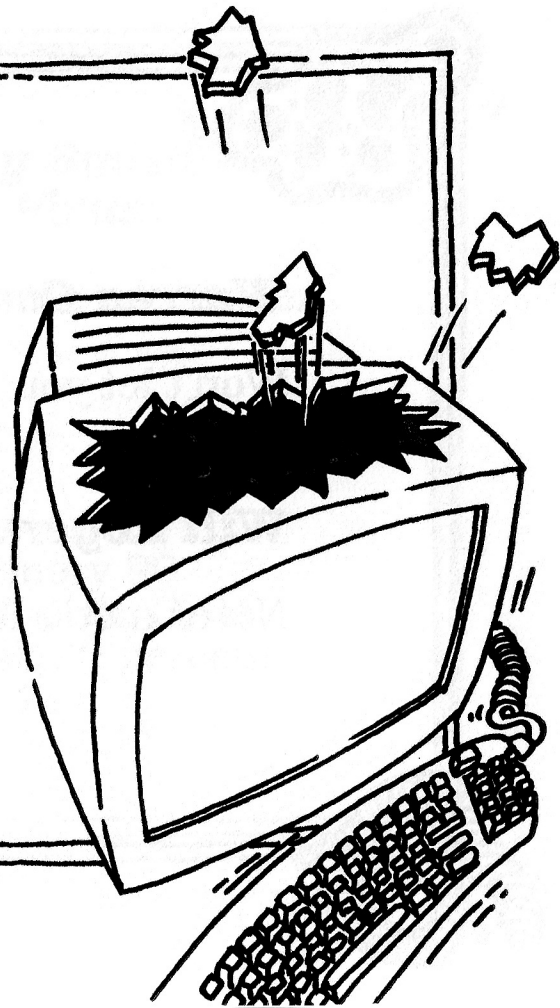
When your word processor comes to a page break, it flips your monitor.

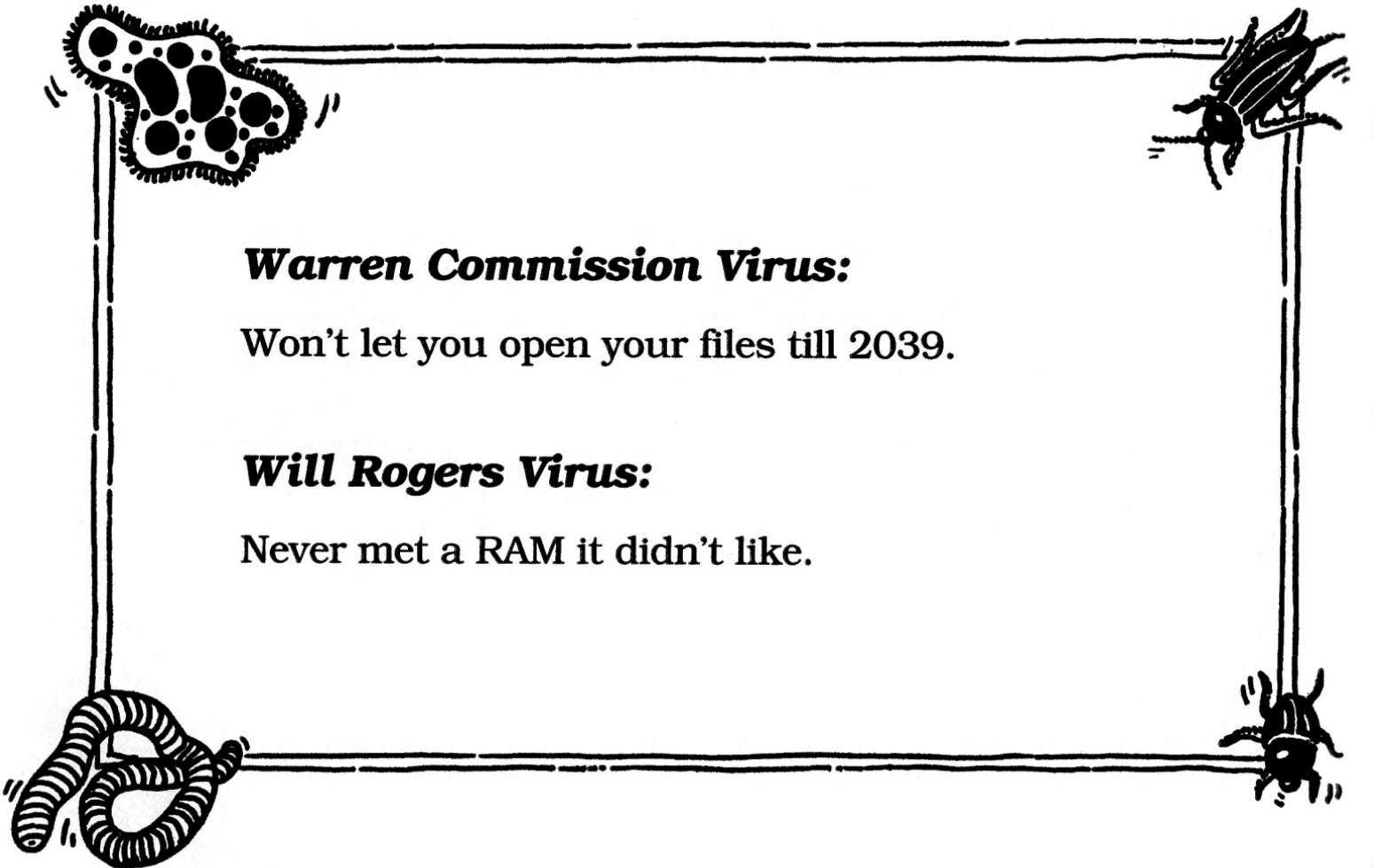
Vanna White Virus, Variant 2:

If you guess the right letter, displays it on the screen.

Wagnerian Ring Virus:

A gigantic heavenly sword plunges from the firmament and pierces a spreadsheet. He who is man enough to pull it out gets to be the accountant.





Warren Commission Virus:

Won't let you open your files till 2039.

Will Rogers Virus:

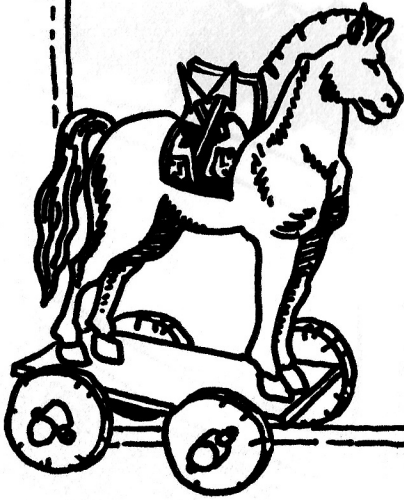
Never met a RAM it didn't like.

***William Kennedy Smith
Mystery Woman Virus:***

Key elements on screen are hidden
behind a blue dot.

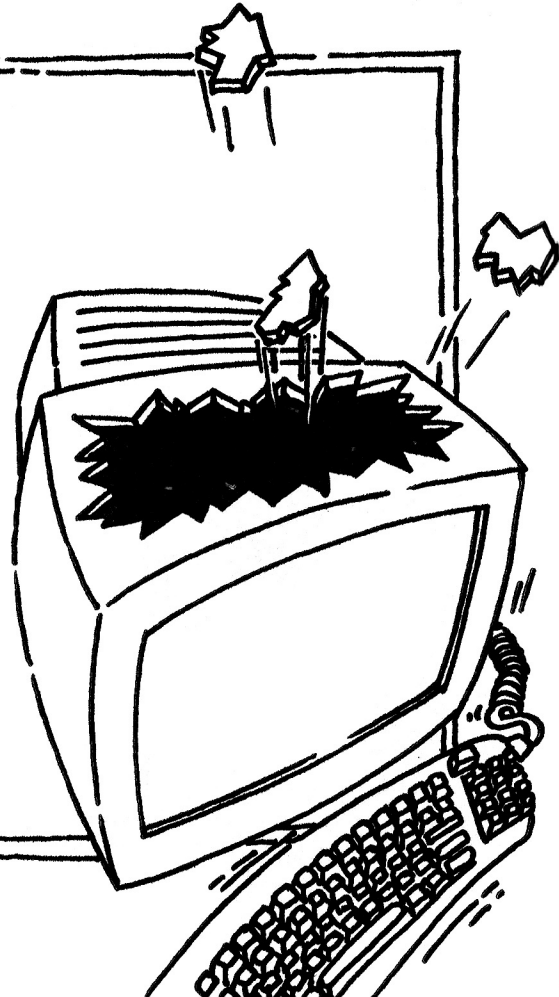
Yogi Berra Virus:

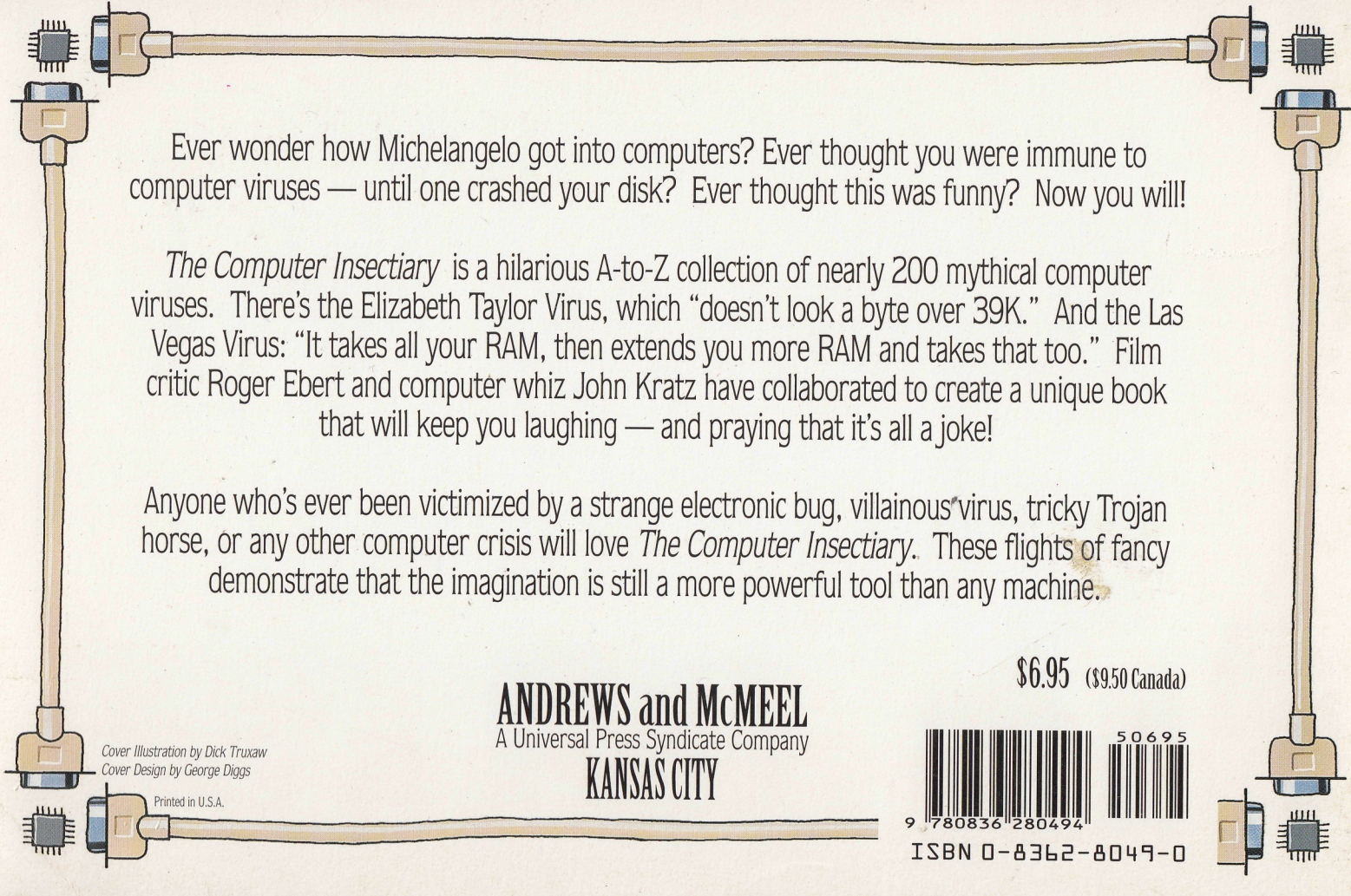
Makes half your memory 90
percent of your hard disk. Or is
it half your hard disk 90 percent
of your memory . . . ?



Zucchini Virus:

Gives you so much data you don't know what to do with it, so you start giving it away to anybody who will take some.





Ever wonder how Michelangelo got into computers? Ever thought you were immune to computer viruses — until one crashed your disk? Ever thought this was funny? Now you will!

The Computer Insectiary is a hilarious A-to-Z collection of nearly 200 mythical computer viruses. There's the Elizabeth Taylor Virus, which "doesn't look a byte over 39K." And the Las Vegas Virus: "It takes all your RAM, then extends you more RAM and takes that too." Film critic Roger Ebert and computer whiz John Kratz have collaborated to create a unique book that will keep you laughing — and praying that it's all a joke!

Anyone who's ever been victimized by a strange electronic bug, villainous virus, tricky Trojan horse, or any other computer crisis will love *The Computer Insectiary*. These flights of fancy demonstrate that the imagination is still a more powerful tool than any machine.

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